

History of The Dar al-Ulum Deoband

VOLUME ONE

THE GREAT RELIGIOUS ACHIEVEMENT OF THE MUSLIMS OF THE
SUBCONTINENT

THE HEADSPRING OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION & CULTURE AND
THE REVIVAL OF THE COMMUNITY

A Historical Survey of the Great Religious and Educational Services
and Political Activities of the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband

By order of the Majlis-e Shura,
Dar al-Ulum, Deoband &
Under instruction of

Hakim al-Islam Hazrat Maulana Qari Muhammad Tayyib,
Vice-chancellor,
Dar al-Ulum, Deoband

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Translated into English by **Prof. Murtaz Husain F. Quraishi**

1980

HISTORY OF THE DAR AL-ULUM, DEOBAND

VOLUME ONE

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DEOBAND

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

The learned compiler of this history in Urdu, Sayyid Mahboob Rizvi, has made use of certain quotations translated into Urdu from some English books, particularly, Sir W.W. Hunter's **Our Indian Muslims**, Prof. Sir T.W. Arnold's **Preaching of Islam**, Prof. Wilfred Cantwell Smith's **Modern Islam in India**, and a Govt. of India's publication **Islamic Institutions in India**. To re-translate such translated passages into English and capture the author's original wordings and style is almost a next-to-impossible task — though it may not be so for a great master of the art of translation like Edward Gibbon, the famous author of the monumental **Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire**. This inimitable historian, in his early career, used to translate long Latin passages into English, which he would put aside for several months to forget all about them and then would re-translate the English versions into Latin to see if they were faithful to the original. Continuous practice over a long time had made him perfect. We, at the most, can reach a near translation only, as in the case of the passage of the last-named book in this translation. Similarly, in the matter of transliterating some foreign proper names, as that of Padre Knowles, the two Japanese, one German and one American scholars, and the Dutch mayor of Johannesburg, the names may not have been spelt correctly.

To facilitate my work as regards the translation of the passages of the last two books mentioned above, first I wrote to my old friend, Dr. M.A. Quraishi, Prof. of Education (Retd.) of M.S. University, Baroda, for sending me his copy of Prof. Smith's book which I had seen at his place some years back. He promptly did but it turned out to be the same author's **Islam in Modern History**. Then I wrote to another old friend, Dr. S. Farid, Director, Anjuman-e Islam Urdu Research Institute, Bombay, to take the trouble of sending me copies of the relevant passages of the said two books. Being a very busy man as he is, Flo took his own time in replying my letter and meanwhile I wrote to a new friend, Dr. Shoaib Azami of the Dept. of Islamic & Arab-Iranian Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, with whom I had come into contact during my all-too-brief 19-day stay in the Jawaharlal Nehru University Campus in connection with the First Summer Institute for Persian Teachers (May 15 – June 4, 1977). The replies of both came about ten days back. Dr. Farid located Smith's book in Gandhi Library, Bombay, but could not find the other book. Dr. Azami could find neither but both were considerate enough to copy —Dr. Azami took the trouble of typing the whole matter—the passages on Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, from Dr. Ziyaud-Din A. Desai's **Centres of**

Islamic Learning in India, another Govt. of India publication, in the hope that this matter would be useful to me. Dr. Ziyad-Din is also an old friend and he would have certainly obliged me with the required passage from the last-named book but I failed to write him for want of his proper address at Nagpur. Anyhow, I am very grateful to all three friends mentioned above, to Dr. Quraishi for the loan of his book, and to Dr. Farid and Dr. Azami for taking the trouble of finding and copying the passages.

Arnold's **Preaching of Islam** I had ordered twenty years ago, after having read Maulana Habib al-Rahman's monumental **Isha'at-e Islam**, for my own section in the college library. Hunter's book, I know, is available in the library of Nadvat al-Ulama, Lucknow, but there is no acquaintance there to write to, and the passage too is much too short.

As regards the official hierarchy in the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, I am of the opinion that the patron (**Sar-parast, Murabbi**) is not the chancellor but is above him while the **Sadr Muhtamim** is the chancellor; and the **Muhtamim** is vice-chancellor while the **Na'ib Muhtamim** is equal to pro-vice-chancellor or rector, because a rector in the modern universities is next to the vice-chancellor, generally. However, I am saying this under correction.

Besides my grateful thanks to the friends mentioned above, grateful acknowledgement is due, first of all, to Hazrat Maulana Qari Muhammad Tayyib (may his shadow never grow less!), vice-chancellor, Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, for selecting me to translate the Tarikh-e Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, into English; then to Maulana Abd al-Haq, Incharge. Daftar-e Ihtemam of the Dar al-Ulum, for his promptitude in correspondence! to Haji A.U. Kadri, retired headmaster of M.E.S. High School, Baroda, and Mr. S.M. Sayed, superintendent, Gujarat S.S.C.E. Board, Baroda, for suggesting and arranging respectively the printing of this book at Sahitya Mudranalaya, Ahmedabad, which is one of the three topmost printing presses in the whole of Gujarat; to Mr. Vishnu S. Pandya, the open-hearted proprietor of the said press "where printing is a craft, not a job", and an expert typographer, for accepting this work at a concessional rate because it is the work of a religious institution which is run on public donations, irrespective of the donor's caste and creed; and last but not the least, to my former Parsi student who has been also my college-colleague for more than twenty years, Prof. Miss Kety M. Dudha, head of the English Department, for wading through and poring over nearly 700 pages of the typescript, pin-pointing typing errors, meticulously marking the missing foot-notes and for her learned aid in proposing some useful changes here and there.

At the end I must pray for the late lamented Sayyid Mahboob Rizvi. On March 25, 1979, he felt uneasy, took a rickshaw home and slumped before receiving medical help; it was a massive heart attack. Unfortunately he did not survive to see his learnedly compiled work rendered into English. May Allah award him a high rank in the precincts where Divine Favours and Mercy descend upon those ulema “whose ink is holier than the blood of the martyrs”! Amen!

Murtaz Husain Faiyaz Husain Quraishi.

Selodwad, Navsari — 396 445. Gujarat.
Saturday, 12th Zil-hijja, A.H. 1399
— November 3, 1979

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE COMPASSIONATE, THE MERCIFUL
INTRODUCTION

By

Hakim al-Islam Hazrat Maulana Qari Muhammad Tayyib,
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**THE INSPIRED MADRASAH & ITS INSPIRED
SCHOOL OF THOUGHT**

“Praise be to Allah, and peace be on His slaves whom He hath chosen”!

Today when the history of the Dar al-Ulum and the details of its achievements are being laid before you, it seems necessary that some light may also be thrown on its spirituality and reality without which this history cannot be complete; though, in view of the art of historiography, importance may not be, attached to such apocalyptic and theopneustic events and, calling them the result of mere good faith, they may be overlooked. But when this spiritual reality may have a basic position in its very foundations, rather the very soul of its total history may be these very realities from which its distinctive dignity may have grown and developed, we understand that its real history itself lies hidden in these peculiarities, and not to recount these is to throw its distinctive dignity into the background. Hence, it was necessary that along with its external history its internal history too may come to the fore: that is, on what spiritual foundation this institution, from the alpha to the omega, has been based and by what realities its ever-increasing popularity has developed.

Fundamentally, in this connection, the foremost thing is its school of thought without elucidating which neither any light can be thrown on its, spirituality nor its religious orientation can be exposed. Some questions arise here: Firstly, what is its central thought from which its *raison d'être* may be determined? What are the constituents of its central thought from which its angles of action may be fixed? What is the head-spring of this thought from which it received this thought? What is the route to reach it whereby its being authentic and satisfactory may become conspicuous? These are the very questions without solving which no light can be thrown on its spirituality and reality.

So, the first thing in this connection is that the chain of authenticity of the Dar al-Ulum starts with the great traditionist of India, Hazrat Imam Shah Wali Allah Dehelvi whose continuous chain of authenticity reaches back the Holy Prophet (Allah's peace and blessings be upon him !). Shah

Wali Allah's knowledge, taste and thought, through the medium of Shah Abd al-Aziz, Shah Muhammad Ishaq and then Shah Abd al-Ghani, reached Hujjat al-Islam (the Proof of Islam), Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautavi and Maulana Rasheed Ahmed Gangohi, who universalized it through this sacred institution, i.e., the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband. So, undoubtedly, in the teaching of the Book and the Sunnah and in the elucidating and stating of the greatness and veneration of Divine Unity (Tauheed) and apostle-hood (risalat), Shah Wali Allah has had a peculiar colour and a remarkable style of explaining, and whose foremost nuclear matter is Divine Revelation (wahy) and its discernment, which is the basis of his thought. Then in the sphere of teaching and inculcation there is that speciality of expression which appeals to the psychology of every age, and of which there are different constituents which have been working in it as per the psychology of time. Then this style of thought is not the result of mere rational deliberation or intellectual exercise; it is rather inspirational, the inspirational specialty of which Shah Wali Allah himself has expressed in his monumental work, Hujjat Allahil Baligha. He said:-

One day, after the Asr prayer, I was sitting, concentrating upon Allah, when, suddenly, the auspicious soul of the Holy Prophet (Allah's peace and blessings be upon him!) appeared and enveloped me from above the head. I felt as if a cloth had been thrown over me and in this condition it was put into my heart that it was a hint towards the expressing of a particular speciality of religion; and at that time I felt a light in my chest which was increasing and expanding every moment. After some time my Lord inspired me that the matters the Sublime Pen (the Pen of Destiny) has written for me includes this also that some day I rise up for this matter which I had seen in the form of an expanding light; i.e., a special expression and exposition of religion. Verily the earth shone with the light of her Lord and its rays were reflected at the time of sunset. Light has cast its reflection on the earth (i.e., this light which was a special light of the knowledge of realities covered every side of the heart and it was this that the Chosen Prophet's shariah had to appear in this age in the full attire of proof and argument (which was the zeitgeist of the psychology of this rationalist period). Then one day, in the holy Mecca, I saw the two Imams of religion, Hasan and Husain (may Allah be pleased with both of them!), in dream as if both of them gave me a pen, saying: "This is our grandfather's (Allah's peace and blessings be upon him!) pen". Then I was thinking again and again that I should compile a treatise on this art (mysteries and realities) which may become a source of insight for the novice and prove a commemoration for the adept (and so I wrote the Hujjat Allahil Baligha). (Vol. i, p.3).

It is clear from this that the Shah Sahib had made out through theopneusty that the age of understanding religion with good faith through mere narrative (naql) and tradition (riwayat) was no more, that the period of rational demands and proof-seeking had begun and the firmness of faith (iman) in respect of the knowledge of reality, truth-seeking and doctrinal traditions had become lax and rationalism was gaining ground, so much so that people had become anxious about weighing even the hidden mysteries too in the balance of reason. Therefore, as long as the traditional religion was not presented clothed in the dress of rationalism, the rationalist dispositions of the period would not be satisfied and calling it "all this is naught but fables of the men of old" would declare it to be unworthy of consideration and would thus be deprived of religion. Hence the Shah Sahib, through divine inspiration, decided to transmit religion through this traditional-cum-rational school of thought so that the entire religion, even as it is perfect in respect of narrative and tradition, may appear consummate with regard to reason and knowledge as well, and may not become unworthy of consideration for any rationalist or knowledge-loving man. So he compiled this wonderfully unique book of the time, Hujjat Allahil baligha, on this topic from which it is quite explicit that this thought of stating religion was purely inspirational, inspired into the Wali Allahian heart. At the same time, Shah Sahib also made it clear that these rational expediencies, secrets and mysteries do not constitute the foundation of religion so that religion may stand upon them; rather, the real foundation is divine revelation (wahy-i ilahi) and its authentic narration only; that these rational proofs are merely a means of its affirmation and of making it intelligible to the people, and are not themselves the source of beliefs and purposes of religion; so much so that if any philosophic or rational principle be contradictory to any belief, its renouncement and the gripping of the belief alone would be real religion. So, in that inspired language, he also threw light on the speciality of this expression as well as on its grade of positiveness (hujjat), and said :-

"And when the insistence of every shrewd man began to be expressed on his own opinion and the people's paths became divergent, one community adopted the Book and the Sunnah and, as regards the predecessors' beliefs, grasped them with their teeth. They did not care a fig for the conformance or opposition of the philosophical or rational principle. Even so, if they adopted those rational principles, it was to confute the opponents or to acquire more satisfaction, and not to derive beliefs from them. So, these alone are the Ahl al-Sunnah". (Hujjat p. 9).

Then, not only about beliefs and principles of religion but also academic propositions (masa'il), he said further :-

“And (this Sunnah) has also made it indispensable (wajib) for us that in believing the legal commandments and in the practice thereof, when they may have reached us through authentic narration, we should not at all pause to recognise these expedencies because the common intellects are generally not constant in this knowledge (as long as the knowledge of revelation may not guide them); moreover, for this reason also that the blessed person of the Holy Prophet (Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him!) is far more reliable and trustworthy than our (partial) intellects.” (Hujjat. p. 6).

It is evident from this that in the tack (maslak) of the Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama’ah reason is not the basis; it is rather the revelation. Reason is not the ruler over revelation as the Mu’atazila have understood; on the contrary, revelation is the ruler over reason and is also the criterion of the soundness and sickness of reason. Therefore, whether it be belief or practice, it will be based on revelation, not on rational deliberation, because the divine religion is based on authentic narration and has reached us in the form of tradition. It is not dependent on rational innovations which emerge from within us and do not descend from heaven. These rational expedencies are merely for refuting the enemies or for explaining religion to the enemies and antagonists in their own language or for deriving self-satisfaction, and not for believing and demonstrating religion.

It is clear from this that to present the handed-down (narrated) and traditional religion in the garb of rational arguments, physical expedencies and spiritual secrets and mysteries, and to make religion acceptable to the rationalist dispositions of the period by showing it to be the natural religion, is the first port of this inspired school of thought that was inspired by Allah into the Shah Sahib’s heart. But from the style of expression and the manner of explaining of the **Hujjat Allahil Baligha** itself, in which these rational points of wisdom and proofs have been presented, it is also remarkable that he, ascribing these points of wisdom to relevant verses and traditions, has presented them mostly in an apocalyptic and aesthetic colour. Hence naturally from this can be satisfied only those rationalist dispositions which, believing in these traditions to some extent may also have in their minds some importance of this zest and internal ecstasy (wajdan) and their sense of faith (iman) may not have deadened completely. Otherwise people totally innocent of this belief and unacquainted with the very alley of zest, and completely devoid of this relish, would have, instead of calling it knowledge and wisdom, rejected it, giving it the caption of ‘flight of imagination,’ and, consigning it to disinclination, would have been

deprived of religion as usual, let alone derive any benefit from it. Accordingly, in this initial stage of rationalism which was also the incipient period of the Englishmen's interferences, knavish conspiracies and atheistic theories, from this amalgamation of rationalism and traditionalism at least those people continued to come to the right path whom reason would not let alone peacefully, though. Even so, being somewhat familiar with and affected by the regnant influences of the general milieu and the religious colour of that period, they had not been so much estranged from religion that they would have openly bogged down into the morass of apostasy and atheism, or, totally alienated from internal zest, ecstasy and soundness of conscience, would have come down to plain negation and falsification.

But after the elapsing of the age of childhood of this era, when the time of the youth of rationalism came and the English power also, having passed through the hidden and machinating stage, began to run full gallop in open courses, the said zest too began to dwindle in the same ratio. Rather, when therewith European theories and atheistic thoughts began to arrive in the shape of a rival vis-a-vis religion, and with the cross-breeding of philosophy with science these theories began to take the form of percepts, sheer reason also lagged behind and perceptivity, launching an attack, scrounged its throne of sovereignty; and now the presenting of anything traditional in the garb of the rational no more remained a guarantor of its being believed so long as it was not put forth in the guise of percepts. It was so because the pace of the time and the straw in the wind were showing that shortly Lenin and Stalin would replace Newton and Goethe, and instead of theoretical philosophy, sensory and socialistiaisms and perceptual philosophies were to be founded which would not be prepared to give importance to any theoretical and rational philosophies as long as practical and perceptible factors were not seen working in them; rather, even the swords of strength and power should not obstruct the throats of these socialistic and sensory isms.

Accordingly, swelling like a turkey-cock with the pride of perceptible and material powers, Gladstone's swollen oratory was to echo in the British parliament to the effect that "now we have become so powerful that even if the sky wishes to fall down upon us, we will stop it at the points of our bayonets." Then, after a brief interval, Stalin's was to reverberate in the atmosphere that "now we have banned the entry of God into the Russian borders," and (astronaut) Yuri Gagarin, returning safely from his journey to the moon, was to aver: "I, rising above the gravitational centre of the earth went on circling in the atmosphere of

the sky and witnessed the rising and setting of the sun seventeen times within an hour, but nowhere there I saw God.” Moreover, in this mean world anti-God and anti-prophet societies were also to be founded—merely for the reason that God is invisible to them through bare eyes. God forbid! In sum, in place of the rational gallop, a perceptual race was starting and in place of the faculties of the heart and the mind the sovereignty of the eye of the forehead was to be installed. In other words, that old Judaism, which had divested the Jews of their faith, was to revive again to come before the world and it was this only that they, striking the adze at the very basis of their faith, had fixed the eye to be their deity; and they had said:—

“O Moses! We will not believe in thee till we see Allah plainly.” (11:55)
 “And we will not acknowledge the divine speech to be divine till we hear Allah’s voice with our own ears”.

As though this abnegation had taken the form of a principle that a thing not seen by the eye does not exist; naturally the sequel was that sense had taken the place of intellect and perceptible things the place of rationalism. Hence, they were desirous of seeing with eyes even those spiritualities which are things to be seen with the heart and are free from and above perceptible form and shape. Hence, it had become insufficient to explain to them a subtle and spiritual reality like religion by bringing it before them merely in a rational shirt, as long as it was not brought forth covered with the mantle of perceptible objects. Thus, even as at the beginning of this age of rationalism the respectable Imam Shah Wali Allah, through divine inspiration, carved the way of rational argument and proof for the stating of religion, at the start of this period of perceptivity, a unique gem in his own fourth academic lineage, Shah Abd al-Ghani Muhaddith Dehelvi also, observing this situation of the world, indicated the dress of perceptions, though its practical period began afterwards. Accordingly, this fact becomes apparent from his own (following) incident, which was related by Haji Ameer Shah Khan Khurjavi, a favourite attendant of Qasim al-Ulum Nanautavi, before a group of students among whom this humble writer was also present; that Hakim Nur al-Din (Bhervi), the first khalifa (spiritual successor) of Mirza Ghulam Ahmed Qadiani, was one of the pupils of Shah Abd al-Ghani, though later on he reneged. After he completed his studies, Shah Sahib told him: “Mian Nur al-Din! Books you have already finished, now learn something about remembering Allah.” He replied: “Sir! I have read the Quran, I have read the Hadith. What’s remembrance of Allah besides this?” “Nur al-Din! You must have estimated from my lectures on Hadith,” said Shah Abd al-Ghani, “that

I transform the traditional into the rational; by the practice of remembering Allah this rational will become perceptible." The purport of this observation was that by the excess of zikr (remembrance of Allah) illumination of the heart (ishraq-e qalbi) is achieved and by its lustre, along with the realm of spiritualities, the realities and knowledges of the world of perception are also uncovered. The hint was towards this that now it would not be sufficient to present religion theoretically in the rational colour till it was not put before the world with arguments of the perceptual style and perceptible evidences of which there is no other way except self-discipline (riyazat), spiritual exertion (mujahada) and excess of zikr, whereby gnosis, insight and the dignity of divining realities are created in the heart, and theoretical propositions turn into and look as percepts.

So, in this stating of religion, Imam Shah Wali Allah had included rational expediences and mysteries and a particular disciple of his in the fourth generation (Shah Abd al-Ghani) included along with it perceptual and observational arguments and evidences as well, which was the effect of the light of the same divine inspiration and gnostic intuition. But, anyway, this was the same aesthetic and oratorical manner which, as regards the wisdom of the verses and the traditions, could be effective and appealing to the sentiments of our own people or those individuals who were intellectually proximate. It was, however, not of such argumentative dignity that it could affect a sheer repudiator and a pure antagonist, carrying a hidden negation of the Book and the Divine Revelation in his heart, and who, ab initio, be a denier of the existence of the Creator and, backsliding from the necessity of prophethood, be unconvinced, from the very start, of resurrection, and may have taken these beliefs to be an amusing old fable. How could then the wisdom and insight born of verse and tradition or of relevance to them be effective upon one who would shy at the very mention of a verse and tradition? Hence it was necessary that without the initial mention of verses and traditions, religion might be presented before him with mere scientific principle in philosophical manners and in the style of the isms of the current period in such a way that, apart from narrative and tradition and apart from their rational arguments and perceptible proofs, Islam might appear before him independently in the form of a philosophy and ism. In the beginning it may not be sensed that this is some revealed religion which is being presented before him but he may feel that this is an independent, natural, intrinsic philosophy and a system of life without adopting which man can never pass his life pleasantly; and when love of this religion may have started flowing somewhat in the

straits of his intellect, he may be told at the end that this was the same Islam from which he was shying.

Keeping this situation in mind, if the present-day period is seen, then this situation has reached its extreme stage. The war of today is not that of beliefs and thoughts but it is that of theories; infact it is not of theories even but rather mostly of captions and styles of expression. If today a reality is presented with the names of God and the Prophet, people flee from it, but if the same reality is presented under the captions of civilisation, society and worldly benefits, then not only they deem it worth paying attention to but also consider it acceptable. It means, therefore, that the real enmity is with the names of God and the Prophet, not with their message, provided it is not presented with their names. What else is the upshot of all this but this that in the present-day superficial period all the religious wars are not of realities and events but only of captions; that is, superficiality has come to such a level that meanings and realities apart, the criterion of truth and falsehood has come to depend upon interpretation and interpretative ascriptions. For instance, if initially the inculcation of a belief comes in the name of a religious tradition or a religion and whatever number of exigencies are laid bare, it will continue to be lost to bewilderment and escape, and if the same is presented under the caption of scientific, philosophical, economic and cultural expediencies, in the form of an ism, then not only that it does not prove to be a means of bewilderment and flight but also becomes worthy of attention and cogitation, as though the world has become an appreciator of words and weary of meaning. Hence, its reformation too is possible through percepts and verbal captions only, provided those words be of the same meanings which are meant to be instilled into their hearts. So, for treating the spiritual patients of this period rose up from the fifth academic generation of the same Wali Allahian family an individual who on the afore-said line, presented from the very start the faith and religion, religious beliefs and religious principles and universals, under the impulsion of the same divine inspiration, without mentioning the names of Quran and Hadith or religion and community (millat), in such an argumentative and logical style of expression as if he were presenting, as per the condition of the times, a strong and firm ism in the external caption of which initially was neither the proclamations of religion nor the information of the Invisible, but finally it was the same religion and the belief of the Unseen; but he presented it in such a manner as if it were the inculcation of a pure philosophical ism without believing which neither the social life could be maintained in the right way nor politics and civilization nor life-after-death could be firm and successful. So he laid the foundation of a new perceptual philosophy

and knowledge. We remember this individual as Qasim al-Ulum Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautavi (may Allah have mercy on him!), who was the pith of the sciences of Shah Wali Allah, Shah Abd al-Aziz, Shah Muhammad Ishaq and Shah Abd al-Ghani and the quintessence of their religious discernment, and the same deposit that he had taken from the Wali Allahian era, he put forth before the world in a philosophical manner opposite to the condition of this period. Accordingly, in view of the mentality of the period, verses and traditions or religious technical terms are not initially mentioned anywhere on the surface in Qasim al-Ulum's writings and compilations though in reality they are nothing but verses and traditions; rather, remarkably the interpretative part as regards form consists of argumentative forms, demonstrative proofs and perceptual evidences and illustrations, whereas the internal part, in respect of meanings and imports, consists of the realities of faith, gnostic bonds and apocalyptic and manifestative qualities. So Qasim al-Ulum has reflected the splendour of verses and traditions in the mirror of the indisputable questions (musallamat) and objects of sense of this era, but through philosophical argumentation and logical style of affirmation, in such a way as if an independent philosophy of life were being presented. In the end, however, it is disclosed that this is very much the same Islam by the name of which the world had been bewildered. Thus, it becomes manifest to them that they were quarrelling over only names and captions and they had not got even the wind of the matter, though by nature they were not far from reality. But when by this philosophical style the reality became evident to them, finally the same caption which Allah Lord of Honour had coined for this reality was put on it -----i.e., Islam which Shah Wali Allah and his predecessors had presented.

It was for this reason that Maulana Ubayd Allah Sindhi used to say that the only ladder to Shah Wali Allah's philosophy is the Qasimid philosophy without climbing which one cannot reach the Wali Allahian proofs adequately. So the sciences Shah Wali Allah presents in an aesthetic and apocalyptic colour, Qasim al-Ulum brings them out in an argumentative colour. The former, in fine, does not let the familiar but skeptic persons become repudiators while the latter convinces the repudiators and pure atheists; the former, under verses and traditions, explains them philosophically, while the latter, by his philosophy, brings the backsliders to the door of verses and traditions to ease their entry into the palace of religion, provided, of course, this philosophy reaches or is conveyed to them. And even as the Wali Allahian philosophy is inspired, the Qasimid philosophy too is inspired and is a treasure of afflatus. And even as regards the Wali Allahian philosophy its

propounder himself has made it explicit in his writing that it is theopneustic and not the outcome of mental gymnastics, the elucidation and clarification of which has already been quoted from his writing; about the Qasimid philosophy too the clarifications of its propounder are present in his works. For instance, he himself says in his *Masabih al-Taraveeh* that : –

“Whatever they reveal on the page of my heart, I commit it to the pen.”
Or, for example lecturing on the question of Destiny in his **Taqrir-e Dilpazeer**, he says: –

“Having reached such and such a place of this problem, the pen stopped and the disposition came to a deadlock. So I, resorting to that Court of Honour, beseeched:

‘The drop of wisdom that You released formerly-
kindly let it join Your Own seas!’

Then the door opened, thank Allah, and now whatever He is inspiring into my heart, I am committing it to paper”.

Such clarifications are there at other places also; similarly, they are present in Shah Abd al-Ghani’s works too, if not overtly, then covertly, that his philosophy of suasion is also inspired, even as the information of the traditional’s becoming perceptible was given through the inculcation of the remembrance of Allah to Nur al-Din under the caption of “excess of zikr”; the import of which is nothing but this that the remedy of this pain is divine inspiration which he experienced, and having tasted it himself wished others also to taste it.

Anyway, it is one and the same afflatus (*hikmat-e ladunni*); when it descended upon Shah Wali Allah through divine inspiration, it put on the garb of rational colour in the stating of religion; when it came to Shah Abd al-Ghani, it indicated the performance of percepts; and when it was experienced by Qasim al-Ulum, it took the form of perceptible objects instead of intuitive things and in that too it clothed itself with a ratiocinative dress; and in tune with the changing mentality of the times, this afflatus too went on changing different attires, the common value of which is divine inspiration and intuition. The same intuition (*ilqa*), through divine providence, went on forming and developing the mind of these august men; but since Maulana Nanautavi had derived benefit from and been trained by all of them, he proved to be the quintessence of the knowledge and philosophy of all these elders. Thus he became

the most accomplished exponent of the tack (maslak) of the Ahl al-Sunnah wal Jama'ah and, from time to time, presented the sciences of this tack sometimes in the rational colour, sometimes in the perceptive and sometimes in his convincing dialectical method, in his teaching and inculcation, books and lectures, wherefore this tack came before the world in a comprehensive manner; and its comprehensiveness too became conspicuous that it combines the traditional with the rational, the rational with the perceptive, and the perceptive with the dialectical colour. It is for this reason that in the Qasim al-Ulum's knowledge there is knowledge with gnosis, expediency with command, the traditional with the rational, the rational with the perceptive, benefits with the law, the spiritual path (tariqat) with the high-road (shari'at) of religion, consciousness of divine observation (ahsan) with faith (iman), defence of religion with its affirmation; that is, combining the sentiments of the grandeur of religion with religion, he presented it in the form of a compounded electuary with a life-giving antidotal colour, which comprised realities sprung from the head-spring of pure inspiration. Allah Most High, with His unbounded bounty and favour upon him, had made his physical nature itself such that if he proves one small proposition (mas'ala) it appears in the garb of a general principle which settles not one but hundreds of other details.

It is obvious that when, in his time, Qasim al-Ulum alone was the sole originator of the basic idea of the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, as has been evidenced by his pupils, compeers and elders, it was but ineluctable for this inspirational aspect to come to the fore in the tack of the Dar al-Ulum, and it did. And thereby it became clear that its tack, central thought and religious tendency were not the outcome of cogitation but were a drop from the overflowing sea of divine inspiration. So if it be said, then it can be said without the fear of the blamer's blame that Deobandism is firstly Wali Allahism and secondly Qasimism; and that it is not merely the name of teaching and learning. And in view of the combination of the afore-said academic connections, it can be said that it is not merely a madrasah but it is a madrasah of thought – in the modern technical term, a school of thought.

Thus it becomes evident that Deobandism is neither a creed (mazhab) nor a sect, terms by which its antagonists try to incite the masses against it; but it is a comprehensive picture and a complete edition of the tack of the Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah in which all the offshoots of the Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah are seen joined with their root. What a fine succinct sentence the Poet of the East, the late Dr. Sir Shaikh Muhammad Iqbal – and it beseeemed him alone – had spoken about Deobandism! When someone asked him, "What thing is the Deobandi, a creed or a sect?" he

replied: "It's neither a creed nor a sect; Deobandi is the name of every rationalist religious man."

At all events, the central thought and fundamental religious orientation or tack of the madrasah of Deoband is a comprehensive, moderate and versatile tack of the Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah in which, by the combination of the Sunnah and the Jama'ah (group), the principle of religion, which is the Book and the Sunnah, and respect for the religious personalities – jurisprudents (fuqaha), traditionists (muhaddathin), school doctors (mutakallamin), professional commentators of the Quran (mufasssirin), Sufis, fundamentalists (usuliyyin) and divine doctors (ulama-e-rabbaniyin) both have combined. Neither departing from principle there is invention, novelty and renewal so that the door of heresies (bid'at) and innovations may be opened, nor breaking away from the religious personalities, there is self-esteem and opinionatedness whereby the gate of pride, presumption, self-conceit and haughtiness may be set ajar, and the greatness of the pious predecessors and the just posterity may become chimerical. So, the prevention of the first disease is done with the word 'Al-Sunnah' and the second disease is averted by the word 'Al-Jama'ah', and thus this comprehensive and moderate tack, cleansed of all diseases, has reached us intact through Madrasah of Deoband and other madrasahs of similar nature. Otherwise in whichever tack there is excess and deficiency, it is either due to the absence of both these words, Al-Sunnah and Al-Jama'ah, or the lack of one of them. If there be no sunnah, it will become a tack of heresies and innovations, and if al-Jama'ah be missing, it will become a tack of self-opinion, free-thinking and presumptuousness and the result of these two shortcomings is excess and deficiency.

Arabic Couplets : -

"An unpractical religious divine who does not care about dishonour is a great mischief and a greater mischief than him is an ignorant devotee. Both of them are very great mischiefs in the world for one who follows them in one's religion".

Seeing these resplendent signs of the Qasimid nisba (filiation) prevailing and pervading each and every brick of the Dar al-Ulum, a poem Tabir-e Manam-e Qasimi ("Interpretation of the Qasimid Dreams") gushed out to my pen and paper though neither I am a poet nor the composition of verses is my hobby. But when sentiments crop up and demand to be expressed, neither the art of poetry is a condition for them nor they are restricted by it. The poem is in the Persian language, consisting of 178 couplets. Since some of these couplets concern the Qasimid nisba and its pervasion in the Dar al-Ulum and also appertain to the central thought

of the Dar al-Ulum, they seemed to be apposite to this occasion and, therefore, their presentation here was not considered odd, because it is no new addition if the facts related in prose now appear in the garb of poetry, there being only a difference in the form of expression. And they are as under :-

1. O Qasimid nisba ! Bravo ! The tumult of religion, aggressive as well as defensive, is exciting in the world because of you.
2. O Qasimid nisba ! How honourable you are ! It is due to you that the natural religion is evident to everyone, whether one is just or oppressive.
3. O Qasimid nisba ! How bountiful you are ! This total bounty is dominant universally over the whole world due to you.
4. O Qasimid nisba ! How excellent is your iustice, for the justice of Islam, freed from the two extremes, became known to all through you !
5. O Qasimid nisba ! How most superior you are that the benefaction from the Invisible became a witness and manifest matter to you from the hidden Unseen!
6. O Qasimid nisba ! How well-guiding you are that guidance and instruction have settled down in hearts due to you with moderate understandings.
7. O Qasimid nisba ! How deep is your insight that the care of the end was intelligently understood by the heart of the world due to you.
8. O Qasimid nisba ! The geist, the acuteness of intellects is due to you. The intellect is a creation of God and the moderation of intellects is from you.
9. A nisba comprising good morals and aspects of love, for these alone are light and mercy in this murky house (world);
10. A nisba of knowledge and action, a nisba of love and 'states' (ahwal), a nisba of inner religious understanding, a nisba of the mysteries of sciences;
11. A nisba of knowledge and modesty, a nisba of favours and sufficiency, a nisba of love and fidelity, a nisba of help to the oppressed;

12. A nisba of patience and trust in Allah by way of sincerity and chastity, a nisba of good treatment to the kindred, a nisba of poor earning;
13. A nisba of generosity and liberality, a nisba of benevolence and bounty, a nisba of remedy for deprivation for the pain of the deprived one;
14. A nisba of the glory of brethren for the love of the brethren, a nisba of universal affection and treating with attention.
15. Humility, civility, meekness and courtesy for Allah's sake – a nisba which is free from the contemptible arrogance.
16. You have come as a comprehensive nisba comprising all sorts of merits. Qasim is of you and sciences are distributed from Qasim's door.
17. Your nisba is a nisba amalgamated with religion and state; the meaning of the Immaculate Speech became conspicuous through you.
18. Your days are full with j̥ihad, nights with self-disciplining practices; it is your power that is joined to this exterior and interior.
19. Your day is spent in exterminating infidelity (kufr) and night in self-abnegation; your high spiritedness has merged in the worlds and the souls.
20. All the good attributes were collected and then given to the nisba; that's why the Qasimid nisba became known as comprehensive.
21. The Qasimid nisba is a collection of all these attributes; hence this is the very school of thought in this seminary.
22. It is this wise colour of Islam with which Qasim al-Ulum imbued this seminary.

By keeping this comprehensive and moderate thought or tack of the Madrasa-e Deoband before ourselves, it appears that, under this moderate tack, the aim and ideal of the founder of the Dar al-Ulum was to unite with one another all the genuine tacks and their followers, for factional disunity, at that time, was the order of the day in the country, almost, an integral part of each tack, and, therefore, all the tacks and

their followers, due to differences of their tacks, were engaged in wrangle and squabbles, save those whom Allah had preserved. If a jurisconsult (faqih) was against the Sufi, the Sufi called him a man deprived of esoteric knowledge, on externalist, an undiscerning person and a rigorist; whereas the jurisconsult used to consider the Sufi a prisoner of unauthentic fancies and mental superstitions under the cloak of esoteric knowledge, one suffering from intellectual vertigo and backsliding from the predecessors' beliefs. The traditionist (muhaddith) was the opponent of the schoolman (mutakallim) of the time, and vice versa. The traditionist' used to call the schoolman a captive of intellect, one overawed by time, a renegade from the predecessors and their practices, making religion philosophy in the name of dialectics (kalam), deprived of the predecessors' beliefs, rather an interpolator in religion. And the schoolman had believed the traditionist to be a mere memoriser of words, lost in verbal interpretations, a slave of externalism, ignorant of realities, unaware of the principle of religion, helpless in the intellectual exposition of religion, and unacquainted with language, etc., etc.

In short, the policy difference had changed into controversy of tacks, and difference of tacks into dispute, and the divergence of natures (mashrab) had taken the form of schisms, whereby the germs of diversity and dispersion had spread in the ummah, and everyone was ready to falsify, nay, anathematize each other. But Qasim al-Ulum and his Dar al-Ulum, in their comprehensive tack presented Hadith, Tafsir, Fiqh (jurisprudence), Principles of Fiqh, dialectics, Tassawuf (Sufism), reality and gnosis, all religious sciences and states, as a bouquet of particoloured flowers (each of which, blossoming in its respective bed, was fixed on its stem), in such a compact manner that a centripetal way was created for all the different classes following different tacks to assemble at one point. So this thought on which the foundation of the Dar al-Ulum rests proved to be a combiner of the men of truth and a subduer of the men of falsehood, of which the main reason is that under the education of the Dar al-Ulum, its tack has had two basic elements. One is jurisprudential and dialectical or, briefly speaking, an academic tack, and the other is educative and cultural or, briefly speaking, the ethical tack; and both these academic and ethical tacks being perfectly moderate have accommodated in them the substance of all the tacks, as though it were the sumtotal of the good qualities of all the tacks. Hence all academic and ethical classes can assemble at it and it can be fixed as the meeting-place for all.

So, as far as the academic tack is concerned, its 'asylum of business' (marja'al-amr) is the precious being of Hazrat Shah Wali Allah to whom

this tack has been revealed from Allah through inspiration, details whereof have already been given in the foregone. And even as, by reason of its perfect moderation and comprehensiveness, it is physically a universal centre for all academic classes of people, similarly, if the followers of all the tacks think justly and judiciously, they can assemble at it or at least, admitting it to be their own centre, can draw near it. For instance, as far as the different jurisprudential methods (mazahib-e faqiha) of the jurists of the ummah and the mujtahid-imams are concerned, they have been produced by the external confliction or divergence of hadiths and depend on the narration of one or the other hadith.

The foremost principle of the jurisprudential tack of the Dar al-Ulum is: "To utilize a thing rather than leave it unused is better". The wise do not let go unused even the most ignoble of things, let alone leave an excellent thing unused and let it go waste, and amongst all the excellent things the superexcellent is the prophetic speech as well as the Divine Speech. Hence, to make any aspect of it useless or impracticable is indubitably repugnant to the nature of this tack. The natural corollary of this is that amongst the variant hadiths the one that is most consonant and nearest to the legislator's (peace be on him!) tenor, it is, in conformance to Imam Abu Hanifa, fixed as the real method (mazhab), and all the rest of the traditions are being linked to it in their respective order and place, wherefore no hadith is eliminated from the pale of practice. In other words, there is "conciliation of traditions" (Jam'a bayn al-riwayat), whereby the path of reconciliation and compatibility is created. Without discarding the conflicting traditions, they are made subordinate to the original tradition through rational and traditional reasoning and are brought within the sphere of practice and are not allowed to be wasted by making them useless, so that no aspect of the prophetic speech may remain outside the pale of practice; so much so that instead of jettisoning even the hadith-e mursal, its demonstrativeness (hujjiyat) is acknowledged. Thus no aspect of any tradition discerned by the guiding Imams remains outside the tack. We can interpret it in this way also that the jurisprudential grades of all the Imams collectively come within this tack. At the most there can be difference only of rajeh (superior, "the dipping scale") and marjuh (overcome, "the rising scale") or afzal (most excellent) and mafzool (exalted, made excellent) or asl (root) and far'a (offshoot) or azimat (determination) and rukhsat (permission). However, at some places the difference of ja'iz (permissible) and na-ja'iz (impermissible) is also created, but very little. So this makes no difference in the comprehensiveness of the Hanafite fiqh and the truthfulness of the other systems of fiqh, whether two nasus (explicit and decisive texts or dictums) be mutually opposing or two aspects of a single nass

be opposing each other. So conflict does arise in the casuistic sections (fru'a-t-e ijtehad) but no situation of opposition and controversy can crop up so as to incur the blame of escaping from or avoiding any jurisprudential tack. Thus the truthfulness and glory of the Imams of ijtehad are also maintained in proportion to their dignity and it also does not make any difference in the sincerity and magnitude, respect and veneration of their jurisprudential tacks. Then this divergence too is not that of truth and falsehood so that it may conduce wrangling but is merely of error and right course in which neither aspect is devoid of reward. And it is obvious that when the utmost casuistic endeavours (ijtehadat) of all the jurisprudential systems (fiqhs) and jurisprudents, collecting at one centre, are maintained classwise, befitting their position and rank, not only the crevices of contention and controversy are closed but by way of a common factor a unity of sorts is also created under which all these jurisprudential systems and jurisprudential ranks do not only become reliable but they also converge on one centre which is a clear proof of the comprehensiveness of this tack.

Now as for the true Islamic sects which, though united in principles and bases, are somewhat divergent due to requirements of legal rules, in the meanings of sectional beliefs, it is evident that the source of this too is casuistical thought and view, whereby due to difference in casuistry (ijtehad), divergent points of view may be established and take the forms of beliefs, and they may be begun to be considered sects although they are not sects since all the principles and bases of Islam are united. But since Shah Sahib's tack is comprehensive of explicit text (nass) and casuistry (ijtehad), as long as any casuistical aspect of these sectional beliefs does not come into clash with the fundamental principle and the basic rules and regulations of the Shari'ah, it does not remain unacceptable, save this that instead of giving this aspect its basic position in the proposition, it may be put at an incidental, sectional place, but it cannot be discarded. In this way when any true sect and any of its doctrinal belief does not, with a little reasoning, go out of this tack, there remaining difference of degree only in its being purposeful or purposeless, there arises no situation to discard it too totally when it is within the circle of the probabilities of any explicit text (nass) or the branches of any legal (shara'i) principle. Therefore, in this comprehensive tack these Islamic sects are not wholly estranged from the bona fide sect; rather they draw nearer to it; only the false, pseudo-sects remain outside as they do not at all want to enter the sphere of truth. Now as for those stratas of society which, falling prey to doubts due to merely their own exertions in respect of Islamic propositions (masa'il) look aloof from the masses' tack, and, expressing their opinions in the matters of the Unseen, may be

engaged in the endeavour of weighing the Invisible in the scales of the Visible. So, since this Wali Allahian tack is comprehensive of reason and tradition and combines the rational and the perceptive, and all the beliefs and general principles have been presented in it in the garb of rational proofs and natural expediencies, which is a repellent of all such intellectual doubts and keeps within it the provisions for intellectual solace and satisfaction of the stratas entangled in intellectual complications, then there remains no question of these stratas' fleeing from the tack of truth, provided, of course, they become all ears and listen to these rational proofs of the legalities (shara'iyat) with complete presence of mind. Accordingly, experiences are a witness that whenever such rationalist people have seen this religio-legal (shara'i) tack attired in rational garments and in the dresses of right thought, their doubts have been dispelled as well as they, admitting sincerely their ignorance or carelessness, have drawn near to this tack, or, having become its supporters, have become one of it. Now remain political circles who are habituated to call religion and country (i.e., state) separate, and who are always apprehensive of losing their political ends by taking the name of religion. So, in this middle-of-the-road tack those basic rules of religio-legal politics too, derived from the Book and the Sunnah, have been presented, which are not only the answer to all such doubts but are also the natural way of attaining the political ends.

At all events, the sphere of this moderate tack is comprehensive, broad and inclusive to such an extent that neither the casuistic classes nor the dialectical groups can remain separate from it, nor the philosophical circles, since their indisputable questions lie wrapped in it, can withdraw from it. The implication thereof is nothing else but this that the Wali Allahian tack has, on principle, collected within itself all the sects, circles and classes, and in which all the capabilities of centrality are present which do not let any rationalist academic classes remain outside its pale, and whenever these will be used with equity and justice, they will prove a satisfactory recipe and a comprehensive centre of attention and will pull out mutual contentions and communal schisms root and branch. Accordingly, an independent discussion in the **Hujjat Allahil Baligha** consists of politics, sociology, civilization and societies and the title thereof therein is Irtefaqat (Societies), in which religio-legal discussions and religio-legal points about the political branch have been fully exposed with natural arguments so that no reasonable theory of the present-day politics too is out of its pale. Hence for political bodies too this tack has had the position of a compact centre at which these circles can assemble, provided they look into it and try to grasp it.

On the other hand, the other fundamental element of this tack of the Dar al-Ulum is the cultivation of good morals and purification (tazkia) of the selves, which is born through austere practices (riyazat), striving with the unregenerate soul (mujahadat), and the Sufi orders (salasil). Under this tack the great ones of the Deoband group are mostly attached to the Chishtiyya and many of them to the Naqshabandiyya order. The nearest asylum and boundary of the Naqshabandiyya family is the great crusader, Sayyid Ahmed Shaheed Rai Bareillvi (Allah's mercy be on him!) and the retreat and shelter of the Chishtiyya family is Shah Abd al-Raheem Vilayati. Both are contemporaries and had been dispensing grace universally during the same period. Hence these two orders alone are more well-known and more current in the country. In the Chishtiyya system a qalander-like colour is dominant, the peculiar qualities of which are impetuosity (josh) and tumult (shorish), ecstasy (wajd) and exciting mirthfulness (tarab), etc., under which the uproar of 'state' (hal) and 'utterance' (qul) always dominates over them, wherefore the caption of their lives is 'kindling', 'smouldering' and 'the tearing of clothes.' On the other hand, in the Naqshbandiyya order, there is dominance of concealing and hiding, silence and reticence, aplomb and forbearance – characteristics that make them truly answer to the following couplet : -

“The Naqshbandiyya are strange caravan-leaders ! They lead the caravan through a secret path to the Sanctuary (Haram).”

Apparently there looks a relation of antithesis between both these orders though the destination and purpose is one. But in the afore-said saints, Sayyid Ahmed Shaheed & Shah Abd al-Raheem, of both these orders, a form of reciprocal impressing and impressionability, in a God-engineered manner, was created; and, in sufistic terminology, a way of mutual exchange of mystical qualities in their nisbas appeared. It is a long story. The substance of it is that a condition of expansion, high spirits and exhilaration used to dominate over Sayyid Ahmed Shaheed while a condition of fear, apprehension, shivering, gloom, worry and weeping used to be dominant in Shah Abd al-Raheem.

On the occasion of Sayyid Sahib's journey for jihad, both these august men happened to meet in the mosque of Bunbi and through mutual attraction and absorption sat down in a closed room. When they came out, Sayyid Sahib had a weeping face while Shah Sahib's was all smiles and laughter; i.e. the nisba of each had affected the other: It can be interpreted in this manner also that the Chishtiyya and Naqshbandiyya systems mutually amalgamated and the holy effects and conditions of both the saints

reaching each other, compounded, whereby some effects of tumult and lamentation, weeping and wailing, appeared in Sayyid Sahib's Naqshbandiyya condition while self-possession and quietness, and under the religio-legal mores, the dignity and gravity of conformance to the Sunnah gained dominance in Shah Sahib's Chishtiyya condition. And therefrom this Naqshbandiyya-influenced Chishtiyya quality in which along with internal smouldering the colour of reverence for the Shari'ah and conformance to the Sunnah had become dominant appeared in his most well-guided successor (Khalifa), Hazrat Mianji Nur Muhammad Jhanjhanvi, who expressed it in the following words (which I heard many times from my respectable uncle, Maulana Habib al-Rahman, the sixth vice-chancellor of the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband) that "I have prepared (i.e., cooked in) such a casserole which had not been prepared a hundred years ago nor will be prepared after a hundred years." Recounting these words the said Maulana used to say that the allegory-appreciating men of Allah during the period of the establishment of the Dar al-Ulum held commonly the view that by this Hazrat Mianji Sahib's casserole, not prepared before or after one hundred years, was meant the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, in which tariqat (the esoteric path) has combined with the shari'ah (the exoteric revelation), knowledge of civil mores (adab) with love-sickness (sokhtajani), conformance to the sunnah (itteba'-e sunnat) with 'transitory spiritual 'states' of rapture (ahwal) and 'conditions of enlightenment' (kaifiyat). Hence the people of this order having pathos, hal and qal (rapture and utterance) are not only love-sick but are also decorous (adab-dan) in whom, along with internal pathos, reverence for the shari'ah and conformance to the sunnah dominate at any rate; the internal smouldering being that from the Chishtiyya system and the knowledge of etiquette and the sedateness of conformance to the sunnah being from the Naqshbandiyya order. So this order (silsilah) that came to Maulana Nanautavi and Maulana Gangohi first from Mianji Sahib and then through Haji Imdad Allah, manifested the spiritual graces (fayzan) of these august men in the form of the Dar al-Ulum, which should be called the aggregate of the nisbas of the great ones of both these orders, and its grandeur appeared in the following manner :—

'The goblet of shari'ah on one palm, the anvil of love in the other: every sensual man does not know the art of wielding both the goblet and the anvil.'

The interpretative statement of the elders that this casserole was an allegory for the Dar al-Ulum is further supported and, in respect of reality, proved stronger, which I have heard from the same deceased elders, particularly from my respected uncle, that Hazrat Nanautavi

said: "I have been shown the shape of this madrasah as a hanging pipkin in the World of Prototypes (**Alam e-Mithal**)". Some gentlemen have interpreted this 'hanging pipkin' with '**tawakkul**' (trust in Allah). They assert that the axis of the madrasah is certainly on the pipkin, which is a utensil for food, but it is hanging, which is the aspect and dignity of trust in Allah that even after adopting means the result remains subject to divine will; i.e., the emergence of result by merely adopting means is not certain but remains suspended on divine will. Hence the appearance of this madrasah in the form of a pipkin is a warning to the effect that in respect of this madrasah eyes should be fixed more upon trust in Allah and divine help rather than on external means. For instance, neither any means of permanent income should be created for it nor the firm promises of men of affluence should be relied upon, even as Maulana Nanautavi himself has drawn full attention to this matter in his eight-fold basic principles. But notwithstanding the acknowledgement of this explanation, in the light of the previous incidents, its significance and tack seem more apposite to this comprehensiveness in which the shari'ah and the tariqa, pathos and fascinating etiquette have been gathered together. As though the sum of Mianji Sahib's statement is: "For the last one hundred years comprehensiveness of tack in the Indian community had become languid, and every strata of society, due to absence of comprehensiveness and presence of individualism of tack, was engaged in fighting at close quarters with each other, and, particularly, two separate tacks had been created by calling shar'iah and tariqa as two different paths; but now that dualism and double-facedness has been ended on the hands of this faqir and now, by the admixture of the Chishtiyya and the Naqshbandiyya orders, has come the era of prudent ardour and angelic excitement, the casserole of which is ready and now food cooked in it only will be distributed throughout this country from the east to the west". This is the reason that among these deceased predecessors, inspite of the dominance of the Chishtiyya order, which is their original order, allegiance (bai'at) was being taken in all the four families, particularly in the Naqshbandiyya order, and training was being given, as per capacity, according to all the four orders. A number of great men who could not make progress in the Chishtiyya system were trained by these august men according to the Naqshbandiyya method. Maulana Habib al-Rahman himself used to say about his own condition that "after vowing allegiance to Maulana Gangohi, when I could not make any progress according to the Chishtiyya system, Hazrat Gangohi told me that my share lay in the Naqshbandiyya order, not in the Chishtiyya", and when he was made to walk on that path, he made progress and Allah Most High made him successful and united (wasil) in that order only.

In view of this situation it can be asserted that along with academic and jurisprudential orders, the Sufi orders have also been gathered in the tack of the Dar al-Ulum wherefore no true Naqshbandi and Suhrawardi and Qadiri can remain aloof from them.

When a firm impression of this comprehensive tack fell upon Qasim al-Ulum through the spiritual grace of his director of the path, **(Shaikh-e Tariqat)**, Hazrat Haji Imdad Allah, and he, as evidenced by his Shaikh, became the Shaikh's tongue, even as the Gnostic of Rum (Maulana Jalal al-Din Rumi) had become Shams Tabriz's tongue, this comprehensiveness always remained in his sight and its public manifestation took place in the shape of the Dar al-Ulum, and then, to all intents and purposes, the same came to be fixed as the tack of the Dar al-Ulum also. The 'resort of affair' (**marj'a al-amr**) of one was Shah Wali Allah and of the other the great spiritual successor of Mianji Jhanjhanvi, Haji Imdad Allah, whereby was formed the Qasimid spirituality (**haqiqat**); and since he was the axis of Hadith in the Dar al-Ulum and the 'resort of authority' (**marj'a al-istenad**), it clearly means the same thing which has been mentioned above that the aim of Qasim al-Ulum and the Dar al-Ulum was the unity of all the orders and their respective followers. In the academic tack his aim was to collect all the academic orders and circles so that the sufi and the school man, the traditionist and the jurist, the methodist and the gnostic may not remain disunited and distinct from one another but may be considered one and their arts also, intermingled and blended, may appear in the form of a single discipline.

On the other hand, in the training orders the orders of the saints were to be consolidated so that one who may be a Chishti may also be a Naqshbandi and one who may be either a Naqshbandi or Qadiri or Suhrawardi may also be a Chishti in order that not only the sufistic orders but their followers also may naturally appear as one. Hence if the Dar al-Ulum is acknowledged to be the centre of the unity of the ummah, it will not be against reality. It was the same central thought which was a deposit of the Qasim al-Ulum's heart and which he wanted to expand through the path of the madrasah. Then, the common men of insight used to know this madrasah as only a madrasah but his good self knew it not as a madrasah put as a school of thought, and hence, ab initio, he had made up his mind to make it expansible. This is the reason why in all those nurtured in the Dar al-Ulum, whether great or small, this colour of conciseness was apparent in proportionate degrees and still is, that, in them, along with teaching and learning self-discipline (**riyazat**) and striving (**mujahada**); along with the **sanad** of Hadith the sanad of esoteric succession (**khilafat-e batini**): along with the 'intent-

ness of states' (**josh-e ahwal**) the decorum of '**qal**' (utterance); along with internal smouldering soul-fascinating etiquette; and along with the orders of the shari'ah the orders of the tariqa, were established collaterally. While the Sabiri line of Kaliar and the Quddusi method of Gangoh came through the Chishtiyya system the Mujaddid's conformance to the sunnah and Sayyid Ahmed Shaheed's 'elevation of Allah's Word' was accreted through the Naqshbandiyya line. Hence in the young alumni of the madrasah neither rigorism was produced so that harshness might appear from them nor was there sheer softness so that they might be accused of cajoling; neither did they condone the unlawful things (**munkarat**) so as to receive the blame of being overawed nor did they indulge in imprudent hindering so as to be liable to objection. On the contrary, along with religious staunchness affection for all the creatures and along with poverty (**taqashshuf**) courtesy (**mulatifat**) mutually went into their making, which is the true picture of "but follow a way between" (XVIII: 110), and is a correct interpretation of the said casserole. It was because of this ethos that within the brief period of one hundred years, arrangements for general reformation and training were established in this comprehensive group on a world-wide scale and became successful, whether it was an arrangement for education or preaching, or a mode of training the people or reforming the ummah.

In the central thought of this comprehensive tack, along with arts and sciences, the addition of that class comprehensiveness and collectivity is also included under which this Dar al-Ulum has always stressed unity-amongst Muslims and, on the basis of the unity of the Kalima, the oneness of the ummah, and has always abstained from sectarianism inter se, which is in fact the true spirit of this thought, whereby not only the confusion of the ummah prevailing in it due to seizure of sovereignty from it was removed but a way of gathering together at one point and one centre was also created for it. At the same time, along with the unification of the different classes (of society), the difference of ranks and grades of these classes also became apparent; and then, by the gathering of the top-ranking persons, the way for the gathering of the scattered masses was also automatically forged. This is a different matter that the people, who desire the confusion of the ummah for their own particular ends, believing it to be a sin to come near the door of the place of this gathering, may have made it their ideal to run away from it, and they, let alone points of view, may not have even leisure for observing the observable, then what blame can be laid at the comprehensiveness, and catholicity of this tack? Let them take care of themselves. "But if they turn away, then are they in schism, and Allah will suffice thee (for defence) against them. He is the Hearer, the Knower". (11: 137).

The sum and substance of this is that whether it be the 100-year casserole or the hanging pipkin, both these things are concerned with the spiritual divinings (makshufat) of these elders and predecessors; these are among the matters of the Unseen, not the outcome of rational cogitation or mental callisthenics. And it is obvious that when this Dar al-Ulum is an answer to these casseroles, the result is evident: that the connection of the reality of this institution is with the Invisible powers, tidings and hints from the Unseen, not from mere formal counsels; rather the counsels themselves have depended upon and drawn from the same hints. So what other name but that of "the Inspired Madrasah" can be given to this institution? This is the reason that since the operating power of this institution is an invisible power, today also the power that creates invisible ways of deliverance for it from the difficulties and hindrances of the time is the very same invisible power that, in the very beginning, laid its arrangement in this visible world; and its supervision is so conspicuous that the humblest servants of the Dar al-Ulum like us have been observing all the time and still observe it. It is the effect of this power that its working on mere reliance on Allah is continuing on a world-wide scale without the provision of means; the functionaries' work is only bona fide intention and sincerity, and not its operation.

Similarly this dream of the Qasim al-Ulum that "I am standing on the roof of the Noble House of Allah and canals are flowing from the fingers of my hands and feet and are expanding in all directions of the world" was interpreted by the august men of that era to the effect that the benefits of the prophetic sciences would be current from him throughout the world, and when the Dar al-Ulum came into existence, the same august men called it the interpretative personification of the said dream. Or this dream of Maulana Rafi al-Din Naqshbandi, the emigrant to Madina and the second vice-chancellor of the Dar al-Ulum, that "the keys of the religious sciences have been given into my hands" was also interpreted to mean the same Dar al-Ulum. All these are in fact the interpretations of the same casseroles that had been shown to Hazrat Jhanjhanvi and Maulana Nanautavi, from which it is clear that this Dar al-Ulum, as regards its reality and spiritual significance as well as its incorporation and shape is the manifestation and verification of good tidings from on high, and the Invisible powers themselves are working in its formation. Anyhow, in the thought of this institution on which the spiritual building of the Dar al-Ulum is standing, along with sciential, ethical, practical, rational and political attributes, the attribute of comprehensiveness, collectivity, equity and moderation also proves to be the nucleal factor of its tack. Hence, according to the statements of the great elders, among the groups of the men of Allah of the time, this

madrasah, as regards its group, was considered a renovator (mujaddid), which, through its thought and cognition of the individuals' dispositions, discharged the duty of revivifying all the branches of religion and proved to be the collection of the nisbas of the saints of the time.

It is obvious that when the reality and significance of this madrasah, i.e., the very existence of its central thought and its constituents has been due to divine inspiration, it was but natural that divine inspiration should have played a part in its formation, shaping and construction. When the existence of form is naturally subject to its own reality and is its shadow, rather its manifestation, in which that reality shows its splendour, hence, commensurate with its significance, its foundation, its starting, its construction its frame of administration, so much so that the very selection of its main and key personalities too was not made through merely the general customary methods of counselling, that some judicious individuals may lay heads together regarding the establishment of a madrasah and after discussion when all may have arrived at a consensus they may have put the decision into practice. Rather, like its central thought, its formative matters too seen to be subject somewhat to inspirations and heavenly mystical revelations. Accordingly, that central thought also, which, starting from the Wali Allahian family, had reached Hazrat Qasim and Rasheed, was inspired into the hearts of the saints of the time through divine inspiration itself at the time of the mental formation of the establishment of the madrasah, and without any apparent exception the souls of all of them at once expressed it in chorus; as though, in conformance to the prophetic sunnah and as required by the verse "and consult with them" (III; 159), it was also given the form of consultation and deliberation, but the divine hints alone were kept as the basis.

So, whenever these holy men used to gather together, they used to put their mystical revelations (mukashifat) before each other. If one august man said: "It has been inspired into my heart that now there is need of establishing a madrasah to make religious education common in India", another would say: "the same is coming into my head also". If one said: "It has been divulged to me mystically that a madrasah should be established", then another would also say: "the same has come to my mind also". If the fourth one said: It has been shown to me in dream that there is now need of the establishment of a madrasah", another would say, "the same has been revealed mystically to my heart also". In short, this was a voice in unison which was reverberating as a heavenly desire in the minds of all the men of heart, the substance of which, according to their own statements, was as follows: -

“Now that the Muslim power has come to an end in India, collectively, there has been left none to patronise knowledge, and even if there has survived someone, he has not had the courage, due to unfavourable circumstances, to proceed forward, and hence whatever has been left of this heritage of the prophetic sciences has fallen on the way to oblivion. It is therefore apprehended that the Muslim race, falling a prey to ignorance, might fall into the hands of strangers and the Muslim community and religion might be wiped out from this country. Hence the establishment of a madrasah is indispensable whereby the community may be maintained through education and training. If religious consciousness, religious education, religious sentiments survive in the Muslims, they, because of the survival of religion, will be able to adjust their worldly lives also. But if the very basis of the community is done away with, there will remain no question of their reconstruction. So now there is no other way of protecting religion save the establishment of a madrasah”.

It is obvious that this speciality of these august men's mystical revelations coming to the fore was not of the nature of a formal consultation; it was rather an exchange of inspirations and heavenly good tidings on which internal and spiritual consensus was formed and on 15th Muharram, A.H. 1283, it adopted the form of incipience of the Madrasah of Deoband. It is clear from this that the question of the establishment of this madrasah, too, like its central thought, was theopneustic which took place through divine signs. Rather, much earlier than the period of these founders, and besides the Wali Allahian family, other men of Allah of India too had perceived not only the establishment of this madrasah but also its site through divine tokens and had already expressed it in subtle hints.

I have heard it repeatedly from my elders and it was a commonplace and well-known talk in their circles – and then its authority is available in the pages of history also – that when Hazrat Sayyid Ahmed Shaheed Bareillyvi, while en route to the North-west Frontier province in connection with jihad, happened to pass through Deoband and when he reached the place where the madrasah is situated today, he remarked: “Here I am smelling the fragrance of knowledge”, although at that time the rubbish of the town was being dumped at this site. But the adage is famous that every dog has his day. At last, the aromas of knowledge burst forth from here, as Sayyid Ahmed Shaheed had indicated. It is clear from this that the site of the Dar al-Ulum too has been fixed in a way through divine tokens and which, under physical causes, proved a motivation for the desires of the hearts of the elders of the ummah of that era so that they too selected the same site through the desire of

their hearts which had reached them passing through one invisible state to another, till at last, in A.H. 1283, it appeared in the form of the madrasah on the theatre of presence (shuhud). Hazrat Nanautavi, along with his enlightened (raushan-zamir) compeers, became intent upon starting the madrasah, and when Haji Muhammad Abid sent a letter to him at Meerut, informing him that an amount of contributions had been collected and requested him to come to Deoband, Hazrat Nanautavi immediately called Mulla Mahmud Deobandi, who was then a teacher in Meerut, and asked him: "Mullajil! How much pay do you get here"? He replied: Rs. 10/- p.m.". "How is it", said the Maulana, "if your pay is raised to Rs. 15/- p.m and you reside in Deoband"? He replied, "Sir! What can be better than this"? So Maulana Nanautavi gave him the appointment in Meerut itself and sending him to Deoband, wrote to Haji Muhammad Abid: "I am sending Mulla Mahmud on Rs.15/- p.m. You may start the work of education, without waiting for me. I will also reach later". The reasons and expedencies of this absence can be seen in the article "Bani-e Dar al-Ulum", published in the newspaper, Madina, Bijnore, in October 1965.

At all events, the work of education started in the Chhatta Mosque. The construction of the building of the madrasah started eight, nine years later, and while laying the corner-stone, all these august men were present. Since all the basic matters of this madrasah were being implemented through tidings from the Unseen, the eyes of these holy predecessors used to be fixed more – and they used to devote more time to this – on attention towards Allah, invocation, supplication and mystical discoveries from on high rather than on opinion, consultation and mutual understanding. In other words, rising above the customary means, the maintenance of the madrasah depended more on the unforeseen divine help rather than on the provision of material means. Accordingly, the following incident mentioned in the **Arwah-e Salasa**, and has been continuously heard from the elders too, is a just evidence in this regard. After the establishment of the madrasah, Diwan Muhammad Yasin, who was a favourite proselyte (murid) of Maulana Qasim al-Ulum and was, through one relation, my maternal grandfather also, and was also the first organiser of the library of the Dar al-Ulum, went on pilgrimage to holy Mecca. There he used to be frequently present in the auspicious majlis (assembly) of his Shaikh's Shaikh, Haji Imdad Allah Sahib. While departing from there (Mecca), he requested Haji Sahib to pray for "our madrasah". Haji Sahib retorted. "How fine! It was we who rubbed our foreheads in prostrations during nights, saying, 'O Allah! Establish a madrasah for the protection of Your religion and knowledge'! and now the madrasah has become yours"! Then he said: "The thought used to come to my mind that the madrasah

would be established at Thana Bhavan (which is Haji Sahib's native-place) or at Nanauta (which is Qasim al-Ulum's native place). But what did we know that the people of Deoband would walk off with it"?

From these events it is fully clear that the yearning for the establishment of a madrasah first cropped up in the heart of the chief of this group - Hazrat Haji Imdad Allah (may his secret be sanctified), and from him it proliferated to his group. All these gentlemen were masters of esoteric knowledge and hence this yearning settled in the heart of every one of them, a fact which we have interpreted as "internal consensus", (batini ijtem'a) in the previous lines. However, this fancy in all these elders was generally limited to the extent of establishing a madrasah only, the purport being religious education and, through this medium, the protection and survival of the Muslims in this country. But as far as the central thought of this madrasah and its universal ideal and, moreover, contending with a world-wide academic movement of atheistic and worldly views brought about by the English people, and, at the same time, consolidation of the scattered community and, most especially, the regaining of the past glory in the country or, at least, its spreading throughout the Islamic world with an autonomous passion, were concerned; such all-embracing desires and programmes were surging only in those persons who, in the jihad of Shamli, under the leadership of the imam of this jihad, Hazrat Haji Imdad Allah, had taken up arms and had seen with their own eyes the corpses of Muslims biting the dust. Amongst them too Maulana Qasim and Maulana Rasheed particularly were Haji Sahib's right-hand men who had before them not only the concepts of the madrasah but also of its collectivity. From the criterion of this point of collectivity Maulana Qasim al-Ulum surpassed all others in these feelings, his spiritual director of the path, Haji Imdad Allah himself had declared him to be the interpreter of his hidden thoughts. Haji Sahib, comparing Qasim al-Ulum to Maulana Rumi, had said "Maulana Rumi was Shams Tabriz's tongue through whom his sciences and acquirements (ma'arif) and esoteric thoughts were expressed and Maulavi Muhammad Qasim has been given to me as my tongue; i.e., my sciences and acquirements and desires are expressed through him". Hence these Imdadian qualities emerged particularly in Maulana Nanautavi more than in others, and no sooner did Haji Sahib raise the banner of jihad, Qasim al-Ulum was the first to be under it and it was he who, after five, six months discussions, persuaded Maulana Gangohi also to join it. Similarly, in the proposed madrasah, as also in its thought and purpose the Imdadian sentiment that was there which became apparent from the above-said incident, for it only those people could come forward

who, according to the declaration of the Shaikh himself, were his spiritual interpreters.

Accordingly, as per the narration of Maulana Habib al-Rahman, the sixth vice-chancellor of the Dar al-Ulum, when the question of constructing a building for the Dar al-Ulum arose and Maulana Qasim al-Ulum asserted its necessity, Haji Muhammad Abid, who is counted amongst the founders of the madrasah, dissented from the constructing of a separate building for the Dar al-Ulum and said: "When a spacious Jama Masjid is present in the town and there are also so many rooms on its three sides in which 30 to 40 students can live easily and the vast roofed portion of the Jama Masjid can be sufficient for teaching and learning, why should the Muslims money be wasted in constructing a separate building"? But Qasim al-Ulum, stating the reasons for constructing, said: "Haji Sahib! In respect of this madrasah you are not visualising that thing which is being seen by me. This madrasah is not to remain thus far only; it is destined to go very far. Its basic objectives will be fulfilled only by on independent building". After some interval and parleys the incident of which is long and also needs no mention here, Haji Sahib also agreed on this and all of them together laid the foundation-stone.

It is evident from this that generally the concept of the elders of the madrasah was confined to the extent of teaching and learning only, so much so that the same persisted till the laying of the foundation-stone even, while eight, nine years had already passed over the starting of the madrasah and as yet this broad and universal ideal was not before them which Qasim al-Ulum and his comrades-in-arms in the jihad of Shamli had cherished through divine hints and the grace of Shah Wali Allah and Haji Imdad Allah and after the said jihad these objectives emerged with still more force and resolution of which the headspring was Haji Imdad Allah and the leader was Qasim al-Ulum.

In this Wali Allahian and Imdad Allahian concept the outer cover was that of education and beneath were hidden, through the same educational line, the collective sentiments of the elevation of the Word of Allah, the Muslims' world-wide honour and grandeur, and universal service to the community. Bringing out this reality in one of his articles, entitled **Dar al-Ulum Main Beete Huwe Din**, published in the Dar al-Ulum (magazine), Maulana Manazir Ashan Gilani has quoted Hazrat Shaikh al-Hind's statement as follows:-

“Had the honourable teacher (Hazrat Nanautavi) established this madrasah for teaching and learning, for educating and being educated only? The madrasah was established before me. As far as I know this institution was established after the failure of the revolt of 1857 so that there might be founded a centre under the influence of which people might be prepared to make good the failure of 1857”.

At the end he said:-

“I do not obstruct the way of those whose only purpose and ideal is education, teaching and learning, but for myself I have selected only that way for which my respected teacher had established this organisation of the Dar al-Ulum”.

Accordingly, he also made arrangements in the campus to teach military arts to the students so as to maintain soldier like spirit in them along with knowledge. He also established a department of justice so that the habit of enforcing religious commandments may also be preserved in them. He also made efforts to help the Turks. Panegyric-poems were also written in praise of the Sultan of Turkey so that the connection of the young men of the madrasah might be maintained with the Islamic caliphate. After the English domination such collective societies were also helped and supported which had been established to acquire national rights from the English. Such works could not be performed from the courtyard of the Jama Masjid.

All these objectives continued to be cherished in the same Qasimid descendants. Under the same, after his death, his academic successor, the Shaikh al-Hind, advanced these communal objectives further. His disciples too strengthened the educational lines but they never withdrew themselves from collective services. On the contrary, they took leading part in all the movements for freedom and if, on the one hand, the chief among them were ready to lay down their lives fighting against the English in the battle-field of Shamli, their progeny, on the other, remained ready to die in imprisonment and gaols; and even today it is foremost in speaking the word of truth.

In view of this broad and catholic concept of the Dar al-Ulum, Maulana Habib al-Rahman used to say that creatively this madrasah, in all the affairs of the country, has had the position of an axis around which the collective affairs of the country consciously or unconsciously turn; and as regards the shari'ah, it has had the position of a renovator, which has

revived the various aspects of religion and has levelled the path of conformance to the Sunnah by obliterating the anti-Shari'ah vogues and customs. It was the same versatile concept on which the madrasah of Deoband was founded and Qasim al-Ulum compiled those eightfold basic principles full of the sentiments of this versatility and collectivity on which the foundation of this madrasah rests and it is current to date. It was on this very collective concept that its educational system and the framework of its administration was devised, and on it alone came to the fore those educational peculiarities which had been sequently transmitted to the Qasimid nisba, and he, with the same nisba, was adjudged in this madrasah to be the axis of Hadith and the axis of authority and support under which its trained scholars are still being nurtured. Hence it has been remarked – and if seen minutely, absolutely correctly - that Deobandism, under the Wali Allahian school of thought, is in fact the name of Qasimid-cum-Rasheedian mode of thinking, wherefore the scholars of Deoband write and call themselves Qasimi. Anyhow, from what Haji Imdad Allah said to Dewan Muhammad Yasin, it is clear that the basic idea of this madrasah appearing through Imdadian inspiration, was nurtured in the clean hearts of the crusaders of Shamli and at last emerging from the hearts of the godly crusaders its typical form took the shape of the madrasah of Deoband. What is the upshot of all this but this that the axis of effort and endeavour in connection with the establishment of the madrasah in the eyes of these august men, were not external causes but heavenly causes on which they depended. Secondly, with eyes set on causes, if anyone did form an idea about the site for the establishment of the madrasah, consequently, in the sphere of action, the same invisible mode of vision and mystical discovery used to become dominant which through heavenly motivations, used to take place in the hearts and then in the outside. At all events, even as the central idea of this madrasah was inspirational, the desires for its establishment as well as the finding of its location were also inspirational.

When the problem of construction on this site came forth and these elders, having proposed a plan for the building of the madrasah, got a foundation also dug out for it, though not yet filled up, the same night Maulana Rafi al-Din, the second vice-chancellor of the Dar al-Ulum and one of the great saints of the Naqshbandiyya family, saw in a dream that the Holy Prophet (Allah's peace and blessings be on him!) condescended to come, with a staff in his hand, to the foundation, and said, "Due to this foundation that has been dug (in the northern direction) the courtyard of the madrasah will become small and narrow". Saying this, he, proceeding ten, twenty yards northward, made a mark

with his staff and drew a long line and said: "The foundation should be dug here". Early in the morning, as soon as the said Maulana got up, he reached the site and found the mark of the line in the same condition in which the Holy Prophet (Allah's peace and blessings be on him!) had drawn it with his auspicious staff. He then neither asked the members nor consulted anyone and got the new foundation dug at that very place. It is clear from this that the beginning of construction of this madrasah and the demarcation of its area and courtyard too has been the result of heavenly tidings; otherwise consultations had already taken place and, consequently, the foundation had been dug. But this heavenly tiding and the prophetic suggestion, as they deserved, were at any rate given priority over consultations. It is also clear from this that this dream was of the class of true dreams, rather, a mystical vision (kashf) of sorts, about the reality of which Maulana Rafi al-Din had not had the slightest doubt and suspicion; as otherwise he would not have shown such self-reliance on the basis of a mere dream and fancy and would not have sacrificed so easily the unanimous proposal of the whole group on mere whim and vision. Then, besides this, the concurrence of the whole group with it, making their own proposal null and void and absence of objection of any kind on this step of the Maulana, rather their willing agreement with it, is also a clear proof that all these masters of spiritual knowledge too were considering this dream to be of the class of divine inspiration. From this it is evidenced that the foundations of this madrasah and its constructional matters too were related to tidings from on high.

Then the eightfold basic principles of the madrasah which the founder of this madrasah, who was as though the originator of madrasahs, wrote down, have also been considered inspired, because along with rational and practical principles they also include heavenly predictions, which cannot be made through mere intellect and sagacity save through inspiration. For example, in the same eightfold principles, making the income of the madrasah dependent on trust in Allah and a destitution of sorts, he said by way of prognostication that in case it were not like this, "it looks that the heavenly succour will be cut off". From this, firstly, it becomes clear that the fund of the madrasah is sheer divine help, and then this phrase regarding the future that "it looks" clearly indicates towards divine information which cannot be given any other name but that of "divine inspiration". Maulana Fazl al-Rahman who is counted amongst the founders of the madrasah has expressed the same idea in verse in the following manner :-

It's the will of its founder that when for it

some reliable fund will be provided,
 This hanging lantern and lamp of trust,
 You may take for granted, will become un radiant and lightless'.

Similarly, words of warning of this type are found also in some more clauses of these principles that if these were not followed, it would be difficult for this madrasah to survive, etc., etc.

For this very reason when visitors of the intellectual and sagacious type happened to be in the madrasah and saw these principles, they too involuntarily called them to be inspired. Accordingly, when Maulana Muhammad Ali Jauhar came to the Dar al-Ulum in connection with the Khilafat movement and he was shown Maulana Qasim al-Ulum's original writing in his own hand about these principles, tears came to Maulana Jauhar's eyes and impromptu he exclaimed "What's the relation of these principles with reason? These are purely inspirational". Then he said: "This is strange that the conclusion we have arrived at today, after wandering a hundred years aimlessly (that we should never keep our collective institutions dependent upon any help of the English government, but with self-reliance stand up keeping them in our own hands), these elders had surprisingly already reached it a hundred years ago"! From this the reality becomes quite evident that from the very surface of the principles and affairs of this madrasah every visitor used to feel that this establishment was undoubtedly running through divine help and divine hints, and hence its being an inspired institution had become well-known. Moreover it is also evident from this that not only the madrasah, the ways of the collection of funds for it too have had some connection with divine inspiration. Then even in the administrative affairs and minute proposals in the managing of the madrasah too, divine suggestions seem to be working. Accordingly, this statement of Maulana Rafi al-Din is a just witness to it that "I do not manage the madrasah but Hazrat Nanautavi manages it" (although the latter, notwithstanding all his efforts and full patronage and supervision of the madrasah, never had even a formal connection with the administration, not even with the teaching work, of the madrasah), and yet Maulana Rafi al-Din says that the whole management of the madrasah was being done by Hazrat Nanautavi. The details of this given by him are: "As regards the administration of the madrasah whatever passes through his heart is reflected exactly in mine and I execute it, and later on Hazrat Nanautavi says to me "Maulana! May Allah reward you! This was coming to my mind also". What can be the meaning of this except divine concordance or divine suggestion? it will not only be called an inspiration but also inspirational synchronism from which it is proved that divine inspirations and tidings have

had a hand even in its administration. If a glance is cast over incidents it appears that even the matter of the selection of students for admission, general divine destiny apart beyond which nothing can go, used to be revealed somewhat in a mystical manner, particularly by way of inspiration and tidings, to these enlightened souls, with inspirational suggestions working therein. As such, the following incident is found in the records of the Dar al-Ulum and this humble writer has also heard it directly from his elders that one day Maulana Rafi al-Din, during his vice-chancellorship, was standing in the Maulsari compound (in front of the Nav-darah building) and some students were also present there when a student of Hadith (Daura-e Hadith), taking food from the kitchen of the madrasah, and, throwing down the soup-bowl very insolently before the Maulana, said: "Is this your management and administration that in this watery soup there is neither ghee nor condiments"? He spoke some more reproachful words whereat the other students were also angered but due to respect for the Maulana and his silence, they could not say anything. The Maulana, with great forbearance and self-restraint, looked that student up and down thrice and, after his going away from there, asked, "Is he a student of the madrasah of Deoband"? Then he himself said: "He is not a student of the madrasah". "Sir", said the students, "his name has a regular entry in the kitchen register and he has been taking food from the kitchen regularly". "Whatever it is", said the Maulana, "he is not a student of the madrasah". When an enquiry was held, it turned out after some days that he was really not a student of the madrasah; there was another student of the same name, duly registered, whose rations were being regularly issued from the kitchen, but this audacious student, taking advantage of the similarity of names, was fraudulently taking the rations himself and was depriving the bona fide student of his. When the cat was out of the bag, the students who had witnessed the scene approached the Maulana and told him that the matter turned out to be the same as he had spoken, that that insolent student was an impostor, guilty of impersonation. "But in spite of those entries, Sir, how could you say with such assurance and certainty that he was not a student of the madrasah?" asked the astonished students.

The Maulana said: "In the beginning this work of managing used to embarrass me. Whenever I intended to give it up, Maulana Nanautavi would not let me do so (because it was at the instance of the latter that the Maulana had undertaken this work). Meanwhile I saw a dream that this well of the Dar al-Ulum (which is situated in the Maulsari compound) was brimful with milk, so brimful that the milk could be taken out with hands. The Holy Prophet (Allah's peace and blessings on him!) was

present at the brim and was distributing the milk. Some were filling their skin-bags, some were taking bucketful, some tumblerful, some bowlful and those who had no utensils were taking handfuls only. In short, people were taking away milk in proportion to their capacity. After seeing this dream when I sat down for spiritual contemplation (muraqaba) to understand its meaning and interpretation, it was mystically revealed to me that the well was a prototypal form of the madrasah of Deoband, the milk that of knowledge, the holy being of the Prophet (Allah's peace and blessings be on him) was the distributor of knowledge and those who were taking milk were the students of the madrasah at Deoband who had been personified in the dream". In this connection the strange thing the Maulana said is: "When the academic year begins (i.e., in the month of Shawwal) and students come for admission, I recognise each one of the admission-seekers that he was one of those who were taking milk, and this and this. I looked that impudent student up and down thrice but he was not at all there in that crowd. Hence I could say emphatically that he was not a bona fide student of the Deoband Madrasah. And, praise be to Allah, that it was formally confirmed from the registers also".

It becomes evident from this that the selection of students of this divinely-approved institution is also somehow connected with divine choice which is inspired into the hearts. Mere external means, although they are and have necessarily to be adopted, are not the axis of work here. I rather think that in this institution, due to the grace and bequeathment of the same enlightened august men, it is being marked even today that, under special circumstances and on the occasion of any mischief, those aspects regarding the appointment or dismissal of this type of students or employees which apparently look contrary to the provisions of policies but the result of which, in a divinely managed way, comes out to be better, do occur in the responsible hearts, of which there are many examples. Hence it is estimated that this spirit of divine suggestions which is a heritage from the elders is still working in this institution and is engaged in its work even today. "All praises are for Allah alone"!

I have heard it from my elders that at the time of the appointment of Maulana Hafiz Muhammad Ahmed as the fifth vice-chancellor of the Dar al-Ulum, divergent opinions were expressed at the stage of consultations, as it usually happens. But as Maulavi Mahmud Rampuri, a member of the council of the Dar al-Ulum, reported, Maulana Gongohi said: "I presented this problem before Allah Most High thrice but all

the three times Hafiz Ahmed's name alone came forth that the madrasah would make progress at his hands only". What else can it be called but a divine suggestion? I know that these are not things of the historiographical data, nevertheless the history of this Dar al-Ulum cannot be separated from this institution, since this spirit of faith lies infused in its very foundations. Hence, naturally, along with historical glory the faith of hearts too is identical, and therefore, inseparable from it. Of course, if these august men were plain intellectuals, then possibly such things about them would have been called somewhat inappropriate, but in case of their being gnostics and masters of mystical revelation and miracle, such matters indubitably command a position of precedence in history. This is the reason that among the past alumni of the Dar al-Ulum, called graduates of Deoband, there is no arrangement of any formal link with their institution; nonetheless hearts with hearts and souls with souls are so attached that such attachment is not possible habitually through any formal organisation. If a formal organisation is established, which is often talked about, one cannot deny its utility. But in this inspired institution even that cannot be useful and effective without this spirit, because the real nature of the institution is spirit, not formality; reality, not display; concealing, not publicity; significance, not mere image-making, though, consequentially, the image too is undeniable.

These few events have been committed to pen with a view to bring before readers the originality, spirituality and reality of the Dar al-Ulum along with its history, and to make it clear that the Dar al-Ulum is not the name of its buildings sprawling in a wide, long and broad area, or that its administration is distributed over scores of departments, or that its staff has had hundreds of workers, or that there are numerous offices, or that there is a huge concourse of students, or that it is the axis and centre of a large number of teachers, etc., etc.

If all these things are there, and they are certainly very much there, they pertain to its form, not to its reality. The reality and intrinsic worth are the same invisible powers, its spiritual realities, that permeate its central idea, its basic aim, its religious orientation and the purpose of its construction and establishment, which have been infusing it through the continuous and contiguous nisbas of the men of hearts and masters of spirituality, and are being transmitted through internal relations from soul to soul and heart to heart, wherefore this institution has proved to be a congeries of the nisbas of great men of Allah and colours of sainthoods and has become such a central circle in which these variegated branches of knowledge and morality have not come together through

the black inscriptions of mere books; on the contrary, it was through the effectuation of the spiritual efforts of so many men of heart and the pragmatism of so many pious predecessors and successors that it became a pot-pourri of lights and blessings (barakat). So, if this comprehensiveness of nisbas is summarised in words, then its tack (or track) and wayfarers can be put in this way that even as the tack of this institution consists in knowledge and gnosis, combines reason with love, action with morality, rectitude with politics, tradition with intelligence, seclusion with congregation, devotions with sociability, mysteries with wisdom, sobriety (sahv) with intoxication (sukr), absorption (jazb) with traversing of the path (suluk), rapture (hal) with 'utterance' (qal), and the external (zahir) with the internal (batin); similarly, the traversers of this path who have been coming out fostered in this milieu combine in themselves these nisbas as per their individual capacities. And with regard to these nisbas of the tack we can say that in respect of origin they are Muslim; as a sect, Ahl al-Sunnah wal Jama'ah; as regards method (mazhab), Hanafite; in temper (mashrab), Sufis; in respect of scholastic theology, Ash'arite; as regards the mystical path, Chishtiyya and Naqshbandiyya; in thought, Wali Allahian; in respect of demonstration (burhan), conspicuity (ayan), and preference for school, Qasimid; in respect of religious discernment (tafaquh) and awareness of fiqh, Rasheedian; as regards collectivity (ijtema'iat), Mahmudian, and in respect of central connection, Deobandian, this latter term being not peculiar to the campus of this madrasah only but includes all those seminaries and their academic and practical institutions and circles which, scattered all over the country, are engaged in propagating and disseminating religion and in educating and preaching in different ways.

In short, under these variegated nisbas, the distinctive characteristic of this group has been, along with comprehensiveness of knowledge and good morals, broad-mindedness, tolerance and enlightenment, the service of religion and the community, the nation and the nativeland. But in all these walks of life the question of education has had the highest importance among this group, as all these walks of life could be properly effective in the light of knowledge alone. This very aspect it has kept conspicuous to date as from this the afore-said combinations appeared in it and their factual realities, taking on different forms, kept projecting themselves before the world. The same realities have adopted these different manifestations which we are presenting under the name of Tarikh-e Dar al-Ulum (History of the Dar al-Ulum). So, as far as this history of the Dar al-Ulum is concerned, its compilation too was necessary and ineluctable, because in this world, the abiding of the soul

without body is impossible. Hence, the body and its conditions and ailments cannot be overlooked; on the contrary, as regards thousands of expedencies, it is necessary and inevitable; otherwise, had these historical facts and events of the predecessors not been consequential, exemplary, a guidance and a mercy, it would not have been said that "in their history there is a lesson for men of understanding. It is no invented story but a confirmation of the existing (Scripture) and a detailed explanation of everything, and a guidance and merry for folk who believe" (XII : 111).

Hence it was necessary that a picture of its foundation, its construction, its administrative mode, its manner of working, its esteemed personalities, its curriculum, its method of teaching, its reputed scholars, its council-members, its officials, and the incidents and events pertaining to it, should be drawn, another name of which is history. My own sincere and long-felt emotion from the very beginning was the same that these things should be compiled historically highlighting the importance of chronology especially under these three headings: 1). The Founder of the Dar al-Ulum, 2). The Biography of the Founder of the Dar al-Ulum, and 3). The History of the Dar al-Ulum. So, so far as the first caption is concerned, a detailed article has already been published about it.

Then, the compilation of the biography of the founder of the Dar al-Ulum has been done, at the instance of this very humble writer, by Maulana Manazir Ahsan Gilani, in three volumes, entitled Sawanih-e-Qasimi. Moreover, Maulana Anwar al-Hasan Sherkoti has independently compiled it in two volumes which have already seen the light of the day. And several other gentlemen too have committed its necessary parts to writing which are being published in the form of articles.

As far as the history of the Dar al-Ulum is concerned, it was my own heart-felt desire that I should compile it, but it required the turning of pages, leisure, and composure of mind which I could scarcely have in full measure due to the diffused and extensive works of the management of the Dar al-Ulum. Nevertheless, as it was a heart-felt emotion, it went on gushing out to be put into practice. In A.H. 1348, which was the first year of my charge as vice-chancellor, following a 6-7-year period of rectorship, this humble writer compiled a 67-year report which was not a history proper of the Dar al-Ulum but it did outline its history. For this I also convened a meeting in the campus of the Dar al-Ulum, inviting local and outside esteemed persons; it was held under the chairmanship

of a member of the council, Shaikh Zia al-Haq Rajupuri and the said report, which proved very apt, effective and beneficial, was read out in this meeting. Thereafter this humble writer started from the Dar al-Ulum an extraordinary quarterly journal, entitled Aa'ina-e Dar al-Ulum, in which a summary of year-wise and some historical particulars was being given. Besides a moral benefit from this, financial gain appeared in the form of increase in contributions regarding which letters were being received and contributions went on increasing. Thereafter, in A.H. 1385, in connection with the general administration, education and relevant conditions, some pages were compiled in a methodical and general manner and published in book form. The office published it under the title Tarikh-e Dar al-Ulum, though it was not a history proper of the Dar al-Ulum; it was merely an introduction, but, apart from year-wise particulars, in a methodical and general form, in which, under systematic captions, some examples had been presented. Strict enquiry and encompassment were not in view. At all events, all this happened but the column of the history of the Dar al-Ulum remained blank as usual and it was urgently needed. This problem came up in the Council and its need was felt unanimously. In view of its extensive compilation and importance, our respectable brother, Sayyid Mahboob Rizvi, superintendent of the Record Office of the Dar al-Ulum, who is endowed with a penchant for history and affinity with this art and has had a natural knack of historiography, was chosen for this task of writing the history. Whenever historical questions come up in the Dar al-Ulum, help is taken about them from him only and he discharges this work with great acumen, in an excellent manner. So this choice in connection with the history of the Dar al-Ulum proved very apt and apposite. Devoting all his time to this great and laborious task, he has acquitted himself well of his responsibility and the fact cannot be denied that he has given a remarkable proof of excellent methodology, collection of necessary information and therewith, in a historiographical style, ex cathedra references and documentary proofs, particulars under concise headings, analyses of matters, details at the place of details and compact synopsis at the place of synopsis.

The chronicles have been arranged in the best manner; the diction is fluent and pellucid. In the narration of events, references which are historiographically necessary and conducive to satisfaction have been given, which is something worthy of praise and congratulations. May Allah reward him well !

I was myself benefitted by this history. While reading it, I was uttering Masha Allah (What Allah willeth !) here and there. It was his

desire that i should pen some lines regarding it by way of an introduction, but in narrating the history he has not left any scope for any other person to pick up the pen to write on this topic.

However, with this portraiture and picturisation of the Dar al-Ulum the need was felt that the reality and significance of the Dar al-Ulum should also be brought to the fore so that along with the presentation of the face the presentation of the reality too may appear on these pages. So the matters which our Sayyid Sahib has presented by way of history, I have presented the same as the sources of his history, and I understand that by these lines depicting the spiritual significances both the form and reality of the Dar al-Ulum will come to the fore all at once through this picturisation of its history, and the Dar al-Ulum will become conspicuous with its external and internal qualities. "And Grace is from Allah Alone".

22nd. Rajab,
A.H. 1396.

Muhammad Tayyib.
Vice-Chancellor.
Dar al-Ulum, Deoband.

In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

PREFACE

The nightingale's tumult infused spirit in the garden,
otherwise every bud here was deep in graceful sleep.

The day of Thursday, 15th Muharram, A.H. 1283 (May 30, 1866), was that blessed and auspicious day in the Islamic history of India when the foundation-stone for the renaissance of Islamic sciences was laid in the land of Deoband. Seeing the simple and ordinary manner in which it had been started, it was difficult to visualise and decide that a madrasah beginning so humbly, with utter lack of equipments, was destined to become the centre, within a couple of years, of the Islamic sciences in Asia. Accordingly, before long, students desirous of studying the Book and the Sunnah, the Shari'ah and the Tariqa (the spiritual path), began to flock here in droves from this sub-continent as well as from neighbouring and distant countries like Afghanistan, Iran, Bukhara and Samarkand, Burma, Indonesia, Malaysia, Turkey and the far off regions of the continent of Africa, and within a short time the radiant rays of knowledge and wisdom illumined the heart and mind of the Muslims of the continent of Asia with the light of faith (iman) and Islamic culture.

The time when the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, was established, the old madrasahs in India had almost become extinct, and the condition of two or four that had survived the ravages of time was not better than that of a few glow-worms in a dark night. Apparently it so looked at that time as if the Islamic sciences had packed up their kit from India.

Urdu couplets :—

'Wherever one looked, there were talks of polytheism and innovation; all the madrasahs with curriculums of the Shari'ah had ceased to exist. There was no trace left of the predecessors' grandeur; the era of Islamic sovereignty had come to an end'.

Under these circumstances, some men of Allah and divine doctors, through their inner light, sensed the imminent dangers. They knew it too well that nations have attained their right status through knowledge only. So, without depending upon the government of the time, they

founded the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, with public contributions and co-operation. One of the principles that Hazrat Nanautavi (may his secret be sanctified) proposed for the Dar al-Ulum and other religious madrasahs is also this that the Dar al-Ulum should be run trusting in Allah and with public contributions for which the poor masses alone should be relied upon.

The Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, is today a renowned religious and academic centre in the Islamic world. In the sub-continent it is the largest institution for the dissemination and propagation of Islam and the biggest headspring of education in the Islamic sciences. Such accomplished scholars have come out from the Dar al-Ulum in every period that they, in accordance with the demands of religious needs of the time, have rendered valuable services in disseminating and spreading correct religious beliefs and religious sciences. These gentlemen, besides in this sub-continent, are busy in performing religious and academic services in various other countries also, and everywhere they have acquired a prominent status of religious guidance of the Muslims. The fact is that the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, was a great religious, educational and reformative movement in the thirteenth century hijri. It was such a crucial and crying need of the time that indifference to and connivance at it could cause Muslims to be confronted with inestimable dangers. The caravan that comprised only two souls on 15th Muharram, A.H. 1283, has today in its train individuals from many countries of Asia!

For the last one century, the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband has been considered an incomparable teaching institution for the religious education of the Muslims not only in the sub-continent but also throughout the Islamic world. Besides the Jam'a-e Azhar, Cairo, there is no such institution anywhere in the Islamic world that may have acquired so much importance in point of antiquity, resorting, centrality and strength of students as the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, has. The foundation of the Dar al-Ulum had been laid in this obscure, sleepy village of India at the hands of such sincere and august men that within a short time its academic greatness was established in the world of Islam and it began to be looked upon as the most popular educational institution of the Islamic world, students from the Islamic countries flocking to it for the study and research of different arts and sciences. A large number of personalities, well-versed in the religious sciences, found today in the length and breadth of this sub-continent has quenched its thirst from this very great river of knowledge, and eminent religious doctors (ulema) have been once the alumni of this very educational institution, it is a fact that as regards the worth of academic services not only in the sub-continent but

also in other Islamic countries there is no other educational institution except one or two, that may have rendered such weighty and important religious and academic services to the Muslim community. The achievements of the ulema of the Dar al-Ulum in the fields of religion, education, missionary-work and book-writing have been acknowledged repeatedly not only in India but also in other Islamic lands, and in the fields especially of guidance and instruction, teaching and preaching they seem to be ahead of all others. In the Muslim society of the sub-continent, they command a high rank and a lofty position. With the tumult of the fame of the Dar al-Ulum even the academic assemblies of Afghanistan, Bukhara and Samarqand reverberated. Its graduates became deans and principals of great madrasahs, and it is an authentic history and a fact to assert that this spring of grace of the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, by virtue of its ethos, has been busy for more than a century in quenching the thirst of the seekers of knowledge of different sciences and the whole of Asia is redolent with the aroma of this prophetic garden. Among the hundreds of thousands of seminaries in the world of Islam today there are only two such institutions on which the Muslims have relied most of all: the one is Jam'a-e Azhar, Cairo, and the other is Dar al-Ulum, Deoband. The religious services both these institutions of learning have rendered to the Muslims are sui generis. These very religious, academic and intellectual services of the Dar al-Ulum have made it a cynosure in the Islamic world. And what is more astonishing is that all these advancements have been made by the Dar al-Ulum without being dependent on the government. The blessings (barakat) of the Dar al-Ulum and its universal beneficence are indicating that upon this academic institution a special theophany (tajalli) of divine and prophetic knowledge has cast its light which regularly continues to attract hearts towards it. What and how many great achievements the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, made, what and how many renowned personalities it produced and how they imprinted the stamp of their service and utility in every field of religious life—all these things you will know by going through this history of the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband.

However much pride and joy the Muslims of the sub-continent express over the existence of the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, there can be no doubt about its being correct and justified. The history of the Dar al-Ulum in the present times is a bright chapter in the history of the Muslims' effort and endeavour; this great struggle for the survival of religion and freedom of thought cannot be overlooked in the history of Islam and the Muslims. The Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, is in fact a shoreless ocean from which, besides those of this sub-continent, the seekers of knowledge of the whole of Asia are benefitting. If the history of the Dar al-Ulum is

studied minutely, a perspicacious reader will not fail to see the reality that it is not merely an old-type teaching institution; it is in fact a stupendous movement for the revival of Islam and the survival of the community.

The establishment of this seminary in the land of Deoband and its stability is the result of a concerted effort and endeavour of the Muslims of the sub-continent. Service to religion, support to Islam, renaissance of Islamic arts and sciences and their dissemination, and help to the students craving religious knowledge are the special and momentous achievements of the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband. For one hundred and fourteen years it has been rendering, as per the pious predecessors' tack, the right-type of academic and gnostic training to the Muslims. Even as Cairo, after the fall of Baghdad, became the centre of Islamic arts and sciences, exactly in the same way, after the decline of Delhi, academic centrality fell to the lot of Deoband, and great illustrious personalities rose up from this teaching institution, innumerable scholars were fostered in its laps, and thousands of ulema, Shaikhs, traditionists, jurisconsults, authors and experts of other arts and sciences were produced here and, having become an adonment in the firmament of knowledge and action, rendered and are still rendering services to religion in different manners in every nook and corner of the sub-continent. The history of the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, is a historical chapter on an epoch-making period in the history of Islam as a whole. The long and short of this is that this overflowing ocean of arts and sciences has so far assuaged the thirst of a very large number of the seekers of knowledge, who having become the vernal air, have spread its academic aura in the four corners of the world. Those who benefitted from the Dar al-Ulum are like a luxuriant tree the green and fresh branches and foliage of which it is not easy to compute.

The Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, has been a centre of both the Shariah and the Tariqa from the very day of its inception. All the moons and stars in the sky of the Shar'iah and the Tariqa and knowledge and action that are at the time shining in the sub-continent have been mostly illuminated by this very brilliant sun, and have come out assuaged from this very headspring of knowledge and gnosis. Everyone knows that most of the great ulema of the sub-continent have been the alumni of this very institution and those who feasted at the dinner-cloth of the Dar al-Ulum are now present in most of the Asian countries, where as well as in the sub-continent and certain other foreign lands, they have enkindled the lamps of the Book and the Sunnah, and have imparted the grace of instruction and guidance to countless people.

The Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, has played a great part in investing the Muslims' thoughts and views with freshness and sacredness, their hearts with ambition and courage, and their bodies with strength and energy. Its beneficence is universal and countless men, to satisfy whose academic eagerness there were no means available, have quenched their thirst from it. At the same time, on the model of the Dar al-Ulum sprang up many religious and academic springs, each having its own particular circle of its benefit and grace. They are all the stars of this very solar system by the light of which every nook and corner of the religious and academic life of the Muslims of the sub-continent is radiant.

Very little attention has been paid to this benefit of these religious schools that on account of them the condition of millions of Muslim families has been ameliorated, the Muslims' inferiority complex was removed and that through these schools became available to the community innumerable such individuals, who, according to the conditions and time, guided the Muslims in the different aspects of life. Besides their great services in the revival of Islam, they awakened political consciousness among the Muslims and took leading part in the struggle for freedom as a result of which the countries of the sub-continent acquired independence.

Even as in the past the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, has rendered invaluable services to the cause of Islam, the Muslims and the religious sciences, it is hoped that in future too it will continue to discharge the obligation of inciting the Muslims' power of action, of strengthening the faiths and of preaching and propagating Islam.

Although the pearl-showering cloud of the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, is busy in its work over the world of Islam since about the end of the thirteenth century hijri, very few people are aware of its particulars. It has always been the policy of the elders of the Dar al-Ulum that instead of giving publicity to their work they have kept the spirit of work in view, for which the publishing of the annual report was considered sufficient and that too merely for the reason that the sympathisers of the Dar al-Ulum may continue to know the expenditure of their contributions and be aware of the educational results of those young men whom the community has given into the laps of the Dar al-Ulum. This is the reason that full attention is paid in the report to the income and expenditure of contributions and to the presenting of the annual results of the students. However, incidentally, the events of that particular year are also written, but these events in

the long life of the Dar al-Ulum are so scattered in the annual reports that it is not easy to derive benefit from them.

In connection with the history of the Dar al-Ulum, first of all Maulana Qari Muhammad Tayyib (may his shadow never grow less!), the present Vice-Chancellor of the Dar al-Ulum, wrote, in A.H. 1385, a small book, entitled **Dar al-Ulum Ki Sad-sala Zindigi** ("A Hundred-Year Life of the Dar al-Ulum"), in which he has presented a brief and concise account of the conditions and particulars of the Dar al-Ulum, and its educational, missionary and administrative affairs. However, important events of the Dar al-Ulum were required to be presented in detail so as to provide data for the academic history of the Muslims of India. But it was necessary that a group of seasoned scholars should have undertaken this task of compiling the said history and should have presented their combined efforts after due inquiry and disquisition, and yet what actually happened is that the Majlis-e Shura (Consultative Committee) of the Dar al-Ulum selected a man of imperfect knowledge, semi-literate and know-nothing like me. Besides my incompetence it may also be kept in mind that this is the first impression and hence defects and mistakes are bound to be found in it.

No human work can be free from drawbacks and flaws and omissions, and hence the **History of the Dar al-Ulum** can never be claimed to be complete or to the last word. As it is after all the first attempt, I have only sifted and colligated the diffused and scattered particulars about the Dar al-Ulum to the best of my ability. These events were dispersed like the scattered leaves of a book but now they are before you in the form of a bound book. Since this stupendous work is beyond the power of a single man to complete—it was rather to be performed by a board of authors—the presence of defects and imperfections is unavoidable for which the present writer apologises. Nevertheless the reason of my complacency is :—

(Urdu Couplet)

"What has the beauty of spirit the need of my adorning it, for nature itself applies henna to the tulip"?

For whatever things have escaped mention here or those that have been dealt with cursorily or incompletely, one will have to await the second edition.

It is also necessary to submit here that the Dar al-Ulum, during its long history, has faced many movements and institutions and it is but natural that the impressions and ideas of all of them concerning it cannot

be the same. On such occasions it has been the effort of this writer not to let slip the skirt of justness from his hands, as far as possible. Hence on such controversial events the pen has been set to paper with great prudence and circumspection, trying to pass by such places quickly. After the lapse of long periods over them it is now of no earthly use to describe all the particulars and details and hence such incidents have been mentioned only briefly.

The annually published reports are the main source of the particulars presented in the **History of the Dar al-Ulum**. Some of these are also based on the day-to-day conditions and personal observation. Besides, wherever help has been taken from any other source, reference has been given to it. The mind of the reader is to a great extent satisfied about an event by the reference and everyone getting a chance to evaluate the report can form the opinion that whatever has been stated is reliable or not. Moreover, a great advantage that has been in view from giving source-reference is that the reader will be apprised of many books on this topic, thus facilitating the work of those who might wish to work on it later on. The path, as though, has been blazed, the river has become fordable, and now anyone who wishes to do so can ford through it with ease.

Under the description of events the texts of the reports have been reproduced verbatim at certain places and, at some, their meaning has been given in my own words; this difference is in regard to the occasion and time. The main reason behind this idea is that the reader's mind, at all events, should remain nearer to the original text and its style of writing so as to make him understand the author's manner of thought, writing and expression, and derive benefit thereby within possible limits.

All know it well that it is usually very difficult to write on a new theme. The present writer has dared "to dig through this Mount Besutun", success and felicity are in the hands of Allah Most High. The difficulties and hardships this writer has to pass through in the compilation of this history of the Dar al-Ulum can be well estimated by men of insight. However, whatever I have been able to accomplish is before you; nonetheless I do hope that this my effort will provide a facility of sorts for those who, in future, may intend to work on this topic. If Allah Most High bestow grace, the second impression will be better than this.

The **History of the Dar al-Ulum** has been divided into several chapters and it has been tried to compile each chapter in such a way that detached from its prior and subsequent chapters it can be made into a separate book. As such the readers are likely to find repetition at some places but it was unavoidable because of the above-mentioned expedience.

Allah alone knows better how far this effort of the writer has succeeded; however, it has been my endeavour to produce such a picture of the conditions and events of the Dar al-Ulum whereby the objective of the movement of the Dar al-Ulum may be brought out and it may be known how far the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, has achieved the objectives for the Muslims with which it had come into existence.

“Our Lord ! Accept from us (this duty) Lo ! Thou, only

Thou, art the Hearer, the knower”. (II : 127)

In the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, from the very beginning to date, the hijri year has been in the vogue; in our old histories also the same year was used, but from the 19th Christian century onwards the Christian year has come into general use. So, as regards years, the present writer has used both the Christian and the Hijri years; but in writing these, it has been made necessary that taking the reported year to be the original it has been stated before with the corresponding year after it. Hence at most places the Hijri year comes before but at some places the Christian year too has been mentioned before. From this undertaking the reader can easily know which of the two is the original year and, therefore, more considerable.

The present writer is grateful from the bottom of his heart to Hakim al-Islam Maulana Qari Muhammad Tayyib, Vice-chancellor of the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband (may his shadow last long!), Maulana Qazi Zayn al-Abidin Sajjad, and Maulana Sa'eed Ahmed Akbarabadi, member of the Majlis-e Shura. Were the guidance and valuable opinions of these gentlemen not available to me, it would have been difficult to complete this history. May Allah Most High bestow upon them good recompense and great wages, and on me more chances of benefitting from them in future as well !

Hakim al-Islam Maulana Qari Muhammad Tayyib, notwithstanding his old age and weakness, has taken the trouble of writing a valuable introduction for this history; it is such a magnificent affection and favour to his attendants which is very much beyond the present writer's thanks.

Sayyid Mahboob Rizvi,
Dar al-Ulum, Deoband.

13th Rajab al-Murajjab, A.H. 1396.
=July 22, 1976.

CHAPTER I

In Islam madrasahs (schools) have originated with the mosques. Adjacent to the Prophet's Mosque (in Madina) was that famous dais or estrade which is known as "Suffa" in history. Those of the noble Companions who used to stay here were called "Ashab-e Suffa" ("Companions of the Dais"). There were teachers appointed to teach them. Whenever a preacher had to be sent anywhere to give the call of and preach Islam, the same persons were sent.¹

How much importance teaching and learning had in the Holy Prophet's (Allah's peace and blessings be upon him!) eyes can be estimated from this incident that once when he came to the Prophet's Mosque, he saw the noble Companions sitting in two separate circles, the people in one busy in reading the Quran and invocations and in the other they were engaged in teaching and learning the holy Quran. Seeing this, he said :—

"Verily I have been ordained and sent as a teacher".²
Saying this, he joined the circle busy in the Quranic study.

Till the fourth century Hijri mosques were being utilized for the purpose of imparting education. During this period the founding of madrasahs (seminaries) and maktabas (primary schools) side by side mosques was a general trend. It acquired such universal popularity that this system, more or less, still continues in the mosques of every Islamic country.

THE ORIGIN OF MADRASAHS

The origin of the present type of regular madrasahs in Islam dates back to the fifth century Hijri. It is generally held that it was Nizam al-Mulk Tusi (d. 485/1092) who, in the world of Islam, established the first madrasah named Madrasa-e Nizamia, at Baghdad. But this view is not

¹ *Sirat al-Nabi*. Vol. I, p. 215, 1st ed., Nami Press,

² *Sunan-e Ibn Maja*, chap. Fadl al-Ulama.

correct. The honour of this antecedence, in fact, was destined for the illustrious sovereign of Afghanistan, Sultan Mahmud Ghaznavi (d. 421/1030). Accordingly, in 410/1019, the Sultan built at his capital, Ghazni, a Jama Masjid, which, because of its elegance and beauty, was famous by the name “Uroos-e Falak” (“the Bride of the Sky”). The Sultan, along with the mosque, had also constructed a building for a madrasah. Attached to the madrasah there was also a library full of rare books, and for the expenses of the mosque and the madrasah the Sultan had endowed many villages. Abul Qasim Farishta, the famous historian’s statement is that

“He (the Sultan) founded a madrasah near the mosque, collected excellent and rare books in its library, and, for the expenses of the mosque and the madrasah, endowed many villages”.¹

The Sultan’s example created an ardour in the nobles and “pillars of the state” also for founding madrasahs and within a short time innumerable madrasahs were dotting the districts surrounding Ghazni. Farishta writes :—

“As per the demands of “the people follow the path of their kings”, the nobles of the state began to vie with one another in building mosques, madrasahs, inns and hospices”.²

Ghazni, in those days, by reason of its multitudinous population and cultural progress, was competing with Baghdad, which was then the greatest cultural centre of the Islamic world and the capital of the Abbasid caliphate. Men of learning and accomplishments, erudite scholars and talented poets were being drawn to it from all over the world.

Sultan Mahmud Ghaznavi’s son Sultan Mas’ud (422/1030–432/1040) also maintained the traditions of his illustrious father; accordingly, he founded a number of madrasahs in his dominions. Farishta states :—

¹ According to a report of Ibn-Kathir’s **Al-Bidaya wal-Nihaya**, although clue is found of such a madrasah in which traditionists and jurisprudents had been appointed as teachers during the reign of the ruler of Egypt, Al-Hakim be-Amrillah (386/996–411/1020) but after two, three years, he himself got this madrasah demolished. For details, vide Ibn Kathir’s **Al-Bidaya wal-Nihaya**, vol. xi. p. 342, Sa’adah Press; and also Ibn Athir’s Hashia-e Tarikh al-Kamil, under “conditions” of AH. 400.

^{1 & 2} **Tarikh-e Farishta**. vol. i. p. 30. Nawal Kishore Press. Lucknow.

“In the beginning of his reign he built so many madrasahs and mosques in his territories that the human tongue is helpless in stating their number”.¹

Abu Raihan Biruni’s famous book, **Qanun-e Mas’udi**, has been dedicated to the same Sultan Mas’ud.

ISLAM IN INDIA

Though the Muslims had entered north-west India, upto Sind and the Punjab, as conquerers, the drizzle of the cloud of blessings of Islam had begun to fall on the coastal areas of India and its mountain-valleys as early as the later years of the first century hijri. The Arab traders, having reached the southern regions of India, particularly Malabar, had not only set up their habitations there but had also come to have a hold on the local markets. From ancient times Arabia and India have been linked with each other in commercial and cultural relations. The Muslims’ position in south India and their academic activities can be estimated somewhat from the accounts of travellers who happened to visit this region later – in the third and the fourth centuries of the Hijri era. Ibn Hauqal, a famous traveller of the fourth century hijri, writing as an eyewitness about the conditions prevailing there, says that generally a large group of divines, scholars and jurists used to stay in the mosques and the number of those who used to throng to derive benefit from the said scholars and jurists would be so great that to whichever mosque you might go you would see shoulders brushing against shoulders.²

The fact is that the period of the message of Islam and its spiritual conquests in India had begun much earlier than the triumphant entry of the Muslim conquerers. A large number of Arab colonies had mushroomed in Sri Lanka (Ceylon), Maldives, Travancore, Coromondal, Gujarat, Malabar, etc. In these regions the Muslims had been given a warm welcome and the message of Islam was now spreading gradually and winning hearts. The bounty of Islam was common for the whole humanity, making no distinction between the white and the black, the master and the slave. It was a vernal cloud that irrigated all land, high and low, garden and desert. According to a statement of Sulayman the Trader (237/851). very good relations had developed between the Muslim traders and the local rajahs. In Gujarat a qazi, who was designated “Hunarmand”, used to be appointed by the local government for deciding

¹ Farishta. op: cit., p. 44.

² Safar Nama-e Ibn Hauqal. p 325. Leiden.

the cases of the Muslims and he used to decide the Muslims' cases.¹ During that period numerous Muslim settlements had developed and mosques had been built in them.

These Arab merchants who used to be educated men with sufic knowledge did business in the bazars, mixed with the populace and presenting the practical example of their virtuous and simple life used to change the course of the people's lives and their trends of thought and view. The famous English author, Prof. Sir T.W. Arnold also acknowledges this fact in the following words :—

“But among the sixty millions of Indian Musalmans there are vast number of converts or descendents of converts, in whose conversion force played no part and the only influences at work were the teaching and persuasion of peaceful missionaries”.²

THE MADRASAHS OF INDIA

The founding of independent Muslim rule in the middle of north India begins in the early seventh century hijri from the period of Qutub al-Din Aibak (602/1209–606/1209). In Multan, Nasir al-Din Qubacha, who was ruler there, built a madrasah. The renowned scholar and author, Qazi Minhaj-e Siraj (d. 658/1259) states that the management of this madrasah was in his charge. He has written that:

“in the month of Zil-hijjah, 624/1226 the Madrasa-e Firozi of Uchcha was given in my charge.”³

This was the early period of the great sufi-divine, Shaikh Baha al-Din Zakariyya Multani (578/1182–666/1267). He used to say his pre-dawn prayers daily in this very madrasah. Names of two more madrasahs of that period are found in history; their names were Madrasa-e Mui'zzia and Madrasah-e Nasiriyya.

Qubacha had established another madrasah in Multan on the occasion of Maulana Qutub al-Din Kashani's arrival from Transoxiana (Mawara al-Nahr) and Maulana Kashani was engaged in teaching there for a long time.⁴

¹ Ibid, p. 233.

² *Preaching of Islam* p. 257, Pub.; Lahore, 1961.

³ *Tabaqat-e Nasiri*, p. 124. Pub.; Asiatic Society, Calcutta.

⁴ *Tarikh-e-Farishta*, vol. II, pp. 408 and 292.

At that time, about Muhammad Bakhtiyar Khilji, who was the first to conquer Bengal, Farishta has stated :—

“In Bengal he founded a city, named Rangpur, and made it his capital instead of the Nadia town, and there as well as in the territory he built mosques, hospices and madrasahs according to the practice of Islam, decorating all of them with complete splendour as per the vogue”.¹

By the eighth century hijri the custom of establishing Islamic schools had become common in India. Accordingly, as per Allamah Maqrizi's report, there were as many as one thousand madrasahs in Delhi alone during the reign of Sultan Muhammad Tughlaq (725/1324–752/1351). Salaries for teachers were fixed from the royal treasury. Education was so much common that slave-girls used to be hafiz of the Quran and divine scholars. Along with religious sciences, the rational sciences and mathematics were also taught. Muhammad Tughlaq himself was a highly accomplished scholar and a patron of learning. Besides the holy Quran, he remembered books of several arts by heart and all the four volumes of the **Hedaya** were at the tip of his tongue.²

An idea at the magnificence of the madrasahs built by Muhammad Tughlaq's successor, Firoz Tughlaq (752/1351–790/1388) can be formed from this statement of Zia al-Din Barni that “the Madrasah-e Firozshahi of Delhi, as regards its grandeur, beauty of building, site, good management and excellence of education has had no parallel. For expenses royal grants have been fixed. No other building in the capital, Delhi, can match with it in beauty of construction and the suitability of its location. The building of the madrasah is very spacious, situated in a garden on the bank of a pond. Hundreds of students, divine doctors and scholars are always present here. Residential quarters for students and teachers are also there. On marble floors in the graves of the garden they are seen engaged unencumbered in their academic pursuits”.³

While Firoz Shah started new madrasahs, he also renovated the old ones, issued stipends for the divine scholars and teachers from the royal treasury and endowed big fiefs for the madrasahs.⁴

It stands out as a very important feature of the academic services rendered by Firoz Shah that he paid special attention to the education and

¹ **Tarikh-e Farishta**, vol. ii. pp. 408 and 292.

² **Kitab at-Khatat** by Allamah Maqrizi. vol. ii, p. 134.

³ **Tarikh-e Firozshahi**. p. 569.

⁴ **Tarikh-e Farishta**, vol. i, p. 151.

training of slaves and their children. Besides the memorizing of the holy Quran, the slaves were also provided a chance to acquire other religious sciences, and besides education, they were also taught industries and crafts. According to a statement of Shams Siraj Afif, as many as 1,80,000 slaves acquired education and training in different arts, sciences and crafts.¹

The same Firoz Shah established separate schools for girls also. The world-renowned glob-trotter, Ibn Batutah, describing a place, Hanor, in south India, has written, “(Many) women here know Quran by heart; I saw thirteen schools for girls in this city.”²

In the madrasahs founded in his dominions by the ruler of the Deccan, Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah (895/1489–916/1510) who held sway over the sultanate of Bijapur, the students were given, besides the usual ordinary food, such rich dishes as biryani (a rich, saffron-scented, preparation of rice and meat) and muza’far (another rich, saffron-scented, sweet dish of rice) daily, and each student received a gold coin, called hoon³, per month. Regarding a madrasah named Athaar in the Deccan, the author of **Bustan al-Salatin** has written that:

“the students, on the dinner-cloth of Athaar, were served soup and bread along with biryani and muza’far in the morning and wheat-bread and ‘khichri’ (a dish made of split pulse and rice boiled together) in the evening and each one of them received one hoon also. Besides this they were also helped with books of Arabic and Persian”.⁴

The Sharqi Sultans were the rulers of Jaunpur, in eastern India. They built hundreds of madrasahs and, inviting scholars and men of accomplishments from distant countries granted them valuable fiefs. The academic and educational superiority of Jaunpur lasted till the last period of the Lodi Sultans. The building of the madrasah attached to the Atala Mosque is extant to date. Around the mosque sprawls a vast chain of rooms. The famous and clever king of India, Sher Shah Suri (877/1472–952/1545) had been the alumnus of this very mosque-seminary.⁵

¹ **Tarikh-e Firozshahi** by Shams Siraj Afif, pp. 191-2.

² Urdu Translation of **Safar Nama-e Ibn Batutah**. p. 702, Pub.; Nafees Academy, Karachi. The present name of Hanor is Harnor, which is a tehsil in Maharashtra state.

³ Hoon was a gold coin current in the Deccan. The Urdu idiom “hun barasna” has been coined from the same coin; it means “to rain gold”.

⁴ **Bustan al-Salatin**, referred to in **Hindustan men Musalmano ka Nizam-e Talim wa Tarbiat**, p. 419, Nadvat al-Musannafin, Delhi.

⁵ **Jaunpur Nama**, p. 4, & **Siyar at-Mutakhirin**, vol. i, p. 140.

In the last phase of the 18th century Jaunpur had been attached to the possessions of the East India Company. About the past glory of Jaunpur it is stated in the government documents of that era as under :-

“About Jaunpur, which was the centre of the Muslims’ arts and science and a resort of the ulema, a city which was entitled “the Shiraz of India”, where there were numerous madrasahs, and of which now has been left nothing but a tale of past glory, we can say that it was indeed the Shiraz at India or Paris of the middle ages. Every prince of Jaunpur prided himself over the fact that he was a patron of knowledge and philosophy. In this peaceful land of the royal capital, scholars and philosophers used to be busy in an all-out effort in every kind of academic progress. Till Muhammad Shah’s regime 20 famous madrasahs were extant in Jaunpur but of which names alone now have survived. The founder of one of them belonged to the middle of the 15th century, and of the other, to the middle of the 17th century”.¹

Sultan Sikander Lodi (894/1488–923/1517) built a number of travellers’ rest houses, madrasahs and mosques during his reign and it was during his regime that the Hindus began to lean Persian.²

In Lucknow Shah Pir Muhammad (d. 1085/1674) kept educational activities alive for a long time. His being was a source of grace and blessings. After him his well-guided disciple, Mulla Ghulam Muhammad Naqshband (d. 1126/1714) added more brilliance to the cause of education. Shah Pir Muhammad’s madrasah and hospice, situated on the bank of the Gomti in Lucknow, are known as Teela Pir Muhammad.³

As regards Shaikh Pir Muhammad’s institution, Mufti Muhammad Reza Ansari Farangimahli’s disquisition is that three hundred years ago there was arrangement for the residence of seven hundred students in it. It was in this institution that Hazrat Ghulam Muhammad Naqshband, the great teacher of Mulla Nizam al-Din Farangimahli, the originator of the famous Dars-e Nizami (the Nizami Curriculum) was inspiring students with his imparting of knowledge, and it was again here that Allamah Ghulam Yahya Bihari (d. A.H. 1180) was gracing the masnad of teaching.⁴

¹ **Musalmano ki Qadeem Islami Darsgahen**, p. 42, Pub.; Ma’arif Press, Azamgarh.

² **Tarikh-e Farishta**, vol. i, p. 187.

³ **Hayat-e Shibli**, p. 15.

⁴ **Zamima-e Roznama Qaumi Awaz**. Lucknow, dated March 18, 1973, vide its article Bahr-e Zakhkhar aur Uska Musannif. p. 2.

During the reigns of Humayun (d. 963/1555) and Akbar (963/1555–1014/1605) also there was an unusual increase in the number of madrasahs. In 969/1561, Akbar's foster-mother, Maham Begum, started a madrasah in Delhi the chronogrammatic name of which was "Khayar al-Manzil". The ruins of the dilapidated building of this madrasah are still extant opposite to and near the Old Fort in old Delhi.

Shaikh Abd al-Haq Dehelvi (d. 1052/1642) has stated in his **Akhbar al-Akhyar** regarding his own pursuit of studies that, after having acquired primary education, he went to another madrasah of which the name, as stated by him, was Madrasah-e Delhi. Later on the Shaikh himself graced the masnad of teaching in this madrasah.¹

Maulana Ghulam Ali Azad Bilgiram has stated :—

"Much of the area of the provinces of Oudh and Allahabad consists of the habitations of men of noble descent, each situated at a distance of ten to twenty miles from one another, and these high-born men have had fiefs granted by Sultans and governors. There is an abundance of mosques, madrasahs and hospices in this region. Everywhere the teachers and professors keep their doors wide open for the seekers of knowledge and persuade them to acquire knowledge, wherefore students, in batches after batches, keep moving from one habitation to another, and everywhere they acquire knowledge with peace and tranquillity. The well-to-do people of each habitation fully look after the needs of the students and consider it a great felicity to be of service to them. It was for this reason that Emperor Shah Jahan used to remark : "Purab (i.e., the eastern Gangetic plain) is our Shiraz".²

During Shah Jahan's reign (1037/1627–1068/1657) Delhi, Lahore, Sialkot, Ahmedabad and Jaunpur were such centres of art and science that students, besides those of India, were drawn to them from as far as Herat and Badakhshan. In Sialkot Mulla Kamal Kashmiri was an institution in himself; the famous scholar of the rational sciences, Mulla Abd al-Hakim Sialkoti had been taught and trained by the some Mulla Kamal.

The Fatehpuri Mosque and the Akbarabadi Mosque were built during Shah Jahan's regime. The madrasah at the Fatehpuri Mosque is

¹ **Akhbar al- Akhyar**, p. 492.

² **Ma'athir al-Karam**, vol. i, pp. 221-2.

a noble relic of the same period. The Akbarabadi Mosque has, however, fallen a victim to the ravages of time. It was this latter mosque where Hazrat Shah Abd al-Qadir Dehelvi once put up. Maulana Muhammad Ismail Shaheed, (d. 1246/1830) and Maulana Fazl Haq Khairbadi (d. 1278/1861) had acquired education in the same mosque.

In 1060/1649, Shah Jahan had built a magnificent madrasah, which he had named "Dar al-Baqa," near the Jama Masjid, in its southern direction. This madrasah had become defunct in the early 13th century hijri. Mufti Sadr al-Din Azurda (d. 1285/1868), in his time, revived it and took upon himself the responsibility of paying its expenses. Some of our elders have belonged to this madrasah. Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautavi too had put up in this madrasah.¹ During the tumultuous upheaval of 1857 when the English government confiscated the respectable Mufti's property, ironically enough, the madrasah named Dar al-Baqa (the House of Eternity), received a coup de grace and passed out of existence.

During the Mughal regime the educational advancements of Awrangzeb Alamgir's period (1068/1657–1118/1706) are generally well-known. Besides big cities, Awrangzeb started madrasahs in towns and villages also, granted fiefs to scholars and teachers and stipends to students. Through his vigorous efforts the candles of knowledge were lighted in every province and every city, even towns and villages.

In Lucknow the great educational institution known as Madrasah-e Nizamia, situated in Farangimahal, is a monument of the same period. Awrangzeb, in 1105/1693, granted Mulla Nizam al-Din² (d.1161/1747).

¹ **Sawaneh-e Qasimi**, p. 29 & **Waqe'at-e Dar al-Hukumat-e Delhi**, vol. ii, p. 113.

² Mulla Nizam al-Din Sahalvi was born in A.H. 1089 at Sahali, in Barabanki district. He completed his studies in various branches of knowledge under Shaikh Ghulam Naqshband, the well-guided pupil of Hazrat Shah Pir Muhammad; and for nearly fifty years rendered invaluable services in the field of education in Lucknow. It was he who started the madrasah at Farangimahal in Lucknow, as also the Nizami Curriculum which is prevalent in the Arabic madrasahs. Among the existing madrasahs in India, it is the oldest. From Farangimahal arose great and renowned ulema amongst whom Mulla Hasan (d. 1199/1784), Bahr al-Ulum Maulana Abd al-Ali (d. 1225/1810), Maulana Abd al-Haleem (d. 1285/1868), Maulana Abd al-Hayy (d. 1304/1886), and in the last period, Maulana Abd al-Bari, etc., were the resplendent stars of the firmament of knowledge and learning. Mulla Nizam al-Din died on 9th Jamadi al-Awwal, A.H. 1161 (**Tazkira-e Ulama-e Farangimahal**).

a magnificent mansion which passed by the name of Farangimahal. It is the very same Madrasah-e Nizamia where the curriculum of Arabic studies was structured and which has been still current, for nearly three centuries, in the Arabic madrasahs of India. Though it has undergone many changes, it is still called and is known as the Nizami Curriculum. In this seminary of Farangimahal were nurtured great, illustrious ulema who have rendered momentous services to the cause of knowledge in India. After Mulla Nizam al-Din, his successors such as Bahr al-Ulum Maulana Abd al-Ali, Maulana Abd al-Haleem, Mulla Hasan, and later on, Maulana Abd al-Hayy, etc., not only graced the masnads of teaching but also, through their books, particularly the annotations and scholia of text-books, rendered invaluable academic services the echoes of which still reverberate in the corners of the Arabic schools.¹

It has been mentioned in the foregone that during Awrangzeb's period madrasahs had been opened even in towns and villages.² Accordingly, in Deoband, too, which was then a small town, there was a madrasah, mention of which is found in certain firmans of Awrangzeb. It is stated :-

“Shaikh Wajih al Din, son of Shaikh Muhammad Arif – “the Asylum of Forgiveness” and conversant with various sciences –, son at Bandagi Muhammad Isma’il – “the Asylum of Absolution” – adorned with righteousness and piety and master of learning and accomplishment, is busy in this hospice, in place of his father, in educating students and Sufis and in the remembrance of Allah”.³

¹ For details, vide **Tazkirat Ulama-e Farangimahal** by Maulana Inayat Allah Farangimahali.

² Though a number of books have been written on the political history of the Muslims in India, it is a pity that very little attention has been paid to their academic history. Hence very little is traceable about the academic achievements of the Muslims in India. In this connection the source of valuable information are those firmans and documents of Muslims rulers and ministers of state which are still extant in many families. While these firmans supply a lot of other useful information, they also reveal the Muslims rulers' efforts which they put in for the progress and diffusion of knowledge. Hence it is necessary that the families who possess such royal firmans or writings of the ministers of state should feel the importance of publishing their photocopies, at least, their copies so that one may trace the remarkable academic activities during the medieval period of India.

³ Madrasah Ghazi al-Din has always been a buff of changes, the second phase of its life commenced in A.D. 1792/A.H. 1207, and in A.D. 1825/A.H. 1241, it changed into Delhi college.

Ghazi al-Din Firoz Jang I (d. 1122/1710), who was grandfather of Nizam al-Mulk Asafjāh I, had founded a madrasah in Delhi near the Ajmeri Gate. The same madrasah later on became famous as Delhi College. Maulana Rasheed al-Din Khan Dehelvi (d. 1243/1827) and Maulana Mamluk Ali Nanaautavi (d. 1267/1850) have been the principals at this very college.¹ Many of our elders had acquired education in this madrasah. Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanaautavi (d. 1297/1880), Hazrat Maulana Rasheed Ahmed Gangohi (d. 1323/1905), Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Yaqub Nanaautavi (d. 1302/1884), Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ashan Nanaautavi (d. 1312/1894), Hazrat Maulana Zulfiqar Ali Deobandi (d. 1322/1904), Hazrat Maulana Fazl al-Rahman Deobandi (d. 1325/1907) and many other ulema have been attached to the skirt of grace of this madrasah. Before 1857 this madrasah was a famous seminary of Delhi. This madrasah of Ghazi al-Din Firoz Jang is a live monument of the madrasahs of that period. From its magnificent and spacious building the academic zest and high-spiritedness of our nobles can be estimated. A mosque too had been built with this madrasah. Ghazi al-Din Firoz Jang I is lying in eternal sleep in the courtyard of the same madrasah.

In Rampur there was Madrasah-e 'Aliya which is still extant. The ruler of Rampur, Nawab Faiz Allah Khan, had invited Bahr al-Ulum Maulana Abd al-Ali Farangimahli and appointed him as a teacher. Another divine scholar of the same Farangimahli, Mulla Hasan, also served in this madrasah as teacher. On account of the educational benefits of these great scholars knowledge continued to be in high demand in Rampur for a long time.

The attention of our old historians, writing in Persian, in the medieval period in India has been mainly centred on the wars and political exploits of kings, touching upon academic and cultural achievements here and there only incidentally. The interesting topic of the historical taste in that era consisted in the military and political achievements and hence very little mention of the Muslims' achievements in the academic field is met with in the medieval histories. One reason for this can be this also which, as the author of **Hindustan Ki Qadeem Islami Darsgahen (The Old Islamic Educational Institutions of India)**, in answer to the question.

¹ **Hindustan ki Qadeem Islami Darsgahen**, p. 332

“Why are explicative chapters on the past madrasahs of India not met with in the old Persian histories”? has pointed out as under:-

“The Muslims, by virtue of their religious propensity, always looked upon the function of imparting and receiving education, of teaching and learning, a religious occupation and an act of virtue. Help to students, dissemination of education, endowments for the supply of books and other educational materials, the founding and establishing of madrasahs, service and support to the ulema, etc., were considered by them to be a religious commandment, conducive to blessings (baraka) and prosperity in both the worlds – here and in the hereafter. Hence these things too, like other necessities of life, had become a part and parcel of their lives. Since the daily, routine actions of a man's life are not considered worth mentioning importantly – they are rather mentioned cursorily in ordinary words along with other necessities of life – the old historians do not describe in specific chapters and sections the outstanding achievements of Muslims in the old days in the field of education.”

Then, proceeding further, another reason has been given as under :-

“In olden days there used to be no buildings for educational purposes. Mostly mosques were being used for this purpose. All the mosques of those days used to serve as madrasahs; as such, every old spacious mosque was a great educational institution also. This is the reason that you find spacious and splendid mosques at every step in the old Islamic cities of India. The magnificent mosques that were built and are still extant in the old Islamic state-capitals like Delhi, Agra, Lahore Jaunpur, Ahmedabad (Gujarat), etc., clearly indicate by their external form and appearance that a major portion of them was being used for teaching purposes. In these mosques you will still find a vast succession of small rooms around the courtyard; these were in fact the residential quarters for teachers and students. Some of these are still used for this purpose; for instance, the rooms that were constructed around the extensive courtyards of the Fatehpuri and Akbarabadi mosques, which were built in 1060/1649 in Delhi, were especially meant as hostels for the students. The hospices of old too were commonly used as teaching institutions. The Sufi saints and secluded Shaikhs (spiritual directors) of the time then did not consider ‘striving with the un-regerate soul’ (mujahada-e nafs) and ‘the daily offices’ (waza’if, recitation of holy names or verses prescribed by the Shaikh to the murid) only as worship but regarded the teaching and instructing about both

the Shari'ah (the exoteric revelation) and the Tariqa (the mystical method or system), the exterior and the interior, to be their real ideal.

In every hospice, like the seekers of tasawwuf (Islamic mysticism) and exoteric sciences, a large group of the students of exoteric sciences was also found. A major portion of state grants or private endowments meant for the hospices was spent on students. Hence the old hospices too should be reckoned amongst schools and colleges.

“Along with the mausoleums built over the graves of Sultans and saints were also constructed around them many cloisters and rooms for the some purpose – to be used as madrasahs. Accordingly, the structural design of the tombs of kings like Ala al-Din Khilji, Humayun and others that are still extant in Delhi, Agra, Ahmedabad, Bijapur, etc., itself is revealing their history”.¹

Apart from the patronage of state-governments during the Muslim rule in India, the Muslim's own zest for knowledge which they had inherited from their forefathers has been very little under the obligation of state treasuries. Our old educational institutions did not stand in need of independent buildings: the function of teaching and learning used to be carried on in mosques and hospices, houses and palaces of scholars and nobles, and even in open fields. Usually, renowned ulema used to teach at their own homes and in mosques. The insistence of the Holy Prophet's (Allah's peace and blessings be on him!) instruction that “it is a duty of every Muslim male and every Muslim female to acquire knowledge” had created a universal taste for the acquisition of knowledge. The dissemination of knowledge, teaching and learning, help and support to students, the providing of books and other educational requirements, the founding of madrasahs and the endowing of properties for their expenses, and monetary aid and support to the teachers and the taught; all these acts were considered the cause of good and blessings (baraka) and prosperity in both the worlds. These things, like other necessities of life, had become an essential and integral part of their lives. Teaching has been an indispensable part of the lives of our scholars, whether they may be gracing ministerial chairs or the masnads of judges and jurisconsults, or any other governmental posts; these occupations have never let them neglect their duty (of imparting knowledge).

Since this purpose in those times was served easily by mosques, such buildings were mostly constructed in the old mosques necessarily that they might be used for teaching and accommodating the students.

¹ *Hindustan ki Qadeem Islami Darshgahen*, pp. 10-12.

In this regard the Prophet's Mosque (at Madina) served as a good model for the Muslims. Jama-e Azhar in Egypt and Jama-e Qazvin and Jama-e Zaitunia in Morocco are mosques of this very type and are being used to this day as teaching institutions. As stated in the foregoing, in India itself there are extant in cities and towns large number of such mosques in the courtyards of which, on three sides, one can see a vast line of large and small rooms and courtyards. The Fatehpuri Mosque in Delhi is a relic of the same style; its rooms and courtyards are still being used for teaching and lodging the students. A few examples amongst hundreds and thousands of such mosques are the Wazir Khan Mosque at Lahore and the Atala Mosque at Jaunpur; these mosques were, in their time, great teaching institutions as well'. The Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, itself was, in the first place, established in a mosque where it passed the first ten years of its life.

As regards the general practice of the students' lodging and boarding prevalent in that period, Maulana Ghulam Ali Azad Bilgiram has written in his **Ma'athir al-Karam** :-

"Men of means in every habitation are considerate towards the students and consider it a great good fortune to help them".²

The period of the 12th century hijri in India is that tumultuous time in which along with the Islamic power and grandeur the Muslims' educational activities too had begun to cool down. In those days the Mughal king occupying the throne at Delhi was Muhammad Shah (1131/1718–1161/1748), who, due to his bohemianism and carousing, has earned the nickname of "Rangila Badshah" ("Merry Monarch"). Nevertheless Hazrat Shah Wali Allah Dehelvi's madrasah whose academic benefits have reached every nook and corner in the sub-continent is indebted to the patronage, generosity and obligation of the same merry monarch. The statement of the author of "**Waqe'at-e Dar al-Hukumat-e Delhi**" is that once this madrasah was very splendid and beautiful and was considered a great seminary.³

In the time of Shah Wali Allah's father, Shah Abd al-Raheem (d. 1131/1718), this madrasah was situated at that place where now are situated the graves of these great divines, and is known as "Mihndiyun".

¹ In Europe too the great educational centres generally have had their origin in religious and spiritual centres, churches and monasteries; the Cambridge and Oxford Universities of England developed in churches and monasteries only.

² **Ma'athir at-Karam**, p. 222, Pub.: Mufid-e Aam Press, Agra, 1228/1910.

³ **Waqe'at-e Dar al-Hukumat-e Delhi**, vol. ii, p. 173.

When during Shah Wali Allah's time this place became congested due to the swelling number of students, Muhammad Shah granted a large mansion for the madrasah. This mansion was situated then in Kucha-e Chelan. The author of *Waqe'at-e Dar al-Hukumat-e Delhi* has stated that "the madrasah was destroyed in the violent disturbances of the mutiny; now houses of different people have been built at the site but it is still called mohalla (quarter) of Shah Abd al-Aziz's madrasah".

After Shah Alam Bahadur Shah I's (1118/1706–1124/1714) demise in the last phase of the first quarter of the 12th century hijri, while the Mughal sultanate began to decline, the springs of knowledge in India also began to dry up from the same time. The religious sciences particularly had come to a very critical stage the estimate of which can be made somewhat from the syllabi of that era which will be mentioned shortly. Accordingly, instead of Tafsir, Hadith and Fiqh in our madrasahs, the rational sciences had taken the place of pride and were considered the true criterion of one's scholarship. The commentaries and scholia of **Sadra**, **Shams-e Baz'gha** and **Sharh-e Matal-e** had become the standard of knowledge, as though the Muslims' syllabi in those days consisted of nothing but these sciences. Even if there was talk of the religious sciences, it was limited to a few books of Fiqh only; Tafsir and Hadith had almost gone out of vogue. Maulana Sayyid Manazir Ahsan Gilani, with reference to **Malfuzat-e Azizi**, has stated as under :—

"Mir Zahid who is considered a pre-eminent savant in the Arabic schools on account of his **Zawa'id-e Thalatha** (a classical work of rational interpretation of religion) and was Shah Abd al-Raheem Dehelvi's teacher in logic and philosophy, was discharging a great religious service in Alamgir's army; that is, he had been appointed to perform the duty of a censor — a post which is directly connected with the Islamic jurisprudence and the details of the jurisprudential propositions (masa'il), and unless a man is well-conversant with jurisprudence and its particulars, it is difficult for him to discharge this function efficiently. Mir Zahid, however, had had no confidence in himself as regards Fiqh. Shah Abd al-Aziz reports that

"a nobleman used to study **Sharh-e Waqaya** (a standard work on Fiqh) under the instruction of Mir Zahid but as long as my august grandfather did not come there, Mir Zahid would not start the lessons".¹

In short, logic and philosophy were dominating the Arabic madrasahs of this period and all the time of the students used to be spent in the acquisition of these sciences.

¹ **Malfuzat-e Azizi**, p.82, as quoted in Al-Furquan's Shah Wali Allah No., p, 171. & **Kamalat-e Aziz**, p. 114, Pub. Hashimi. Meerut. A.D. 1897.

SHAH WALI ALLAH'S EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

Such were the conditions and so much remoteness from the religious sciences had been created when there arose from the historic land of Delhi a seeker of the prophetic sciences. He was Hazrat Shah Wali Allah Dehelvi, who was engaged in teaching and learning for twelve years in Madrasah-e Raheemiyyah, established by his father, Shah Abd al-Raheem. Abruptly he left for Hejaz in (1143/1730) and staying there at Madina for nearly two years he acquired the science of Hadith from Shaikh Abu Tahir Madani. As regards Shah Sahib's uncommon geist and genius, this statement of his teacher, Shaikh Abu Tahir Madani (d. 1145/1732), is very significant :—

“Wali Allah gets the wordings of Hadith authenticated by me while I get the meanings of Hadith corrected by him”.¹

In 1145/1732, Hazrat Shah Sahib returned from Hejaz and, having dug a canal of the Science of Hadith from the illuminated Madina brought it to flow anew on the Indian soil. It is the same canal, started by Hazrat Shah Wali Allah, that, after Hazrat Shah Abd al-Ghani's migration from India (to Hejaz), Deoband saved not only from being dried up but also started it from here with full flow, surging forward, lustily. In the past one hundred years its religious benefit has not remained confined to the sub-continent only, rather the compatriots of the pre-eminent imam of the science of Hadith, Imam Bukhari, have also quenched their thirst from this canal. On the other hand, those benefitting from this canal, viz., Hazrat Khalil Ahmed Anbathvi and Hazrat Maulana Husain Ahmed Madani, occupying the masnad of teaching in the illuminated Madina, have rejoined this canal to its main headspring. In fine, the canal started by Hazrat Shah Wali Allah in India has now developed into a raging sea and its arms, having spread all over the continent of Asia during the last one century, are quenching the thirst of the seekers of the prophetic sciences.

It is an undeniable fact that, as far as the education of religious sciences is concerned, Hazrat Shah Wali Allah commands a great central position and unparalleled greatness. He, in his time, was a discerning polymath in religious sciences, a great thinker and a sincere preacher of Islam. Giving the status of an independent system (lit, art) to the realities and branches of knowledge of the Islamic sciences, he provided

¹ Ibid.

a great bulk of material for the security and defence of Islam in India. The splendid efforts made by him in the fields of education and politics in India constitute a golden and brilliant chapter in our history in this country.

During the period of decline of the Mughal empire, the struggle between rival powers and their incessant attacks had destroyed the internal administration of the country; things were all in a tumble. This is no occasion to dilate on Shah Sahib's tremendous exploit in this context, for here I wish to describe only those efforts of his which he put in for the survival and protection of the religious sciences. The political decline of the Mughals had created, along with spiritual and moral degeneration in the Muslims, educational, intellectual and mental inferiority also. Philosophically surveying the conditions with a sagacious discernment and deep insight, he warned the Muslims (about the gravity at the situation and its consequences). His vigorous efforts caused the rivers of grace to flow and thereby assuage the thirst of a large number of people for the science of Hadith. Whatever interest in religious sciences, religious awakening and abstaining from schismatic and polytheistic practices that are witnessed in the sub-continent today are all the after-effects of the reviving achievements of Shah Sahib only. Allah Most High bestowed great blessings (baraka) on his efforts. Accordingly, by the ardent efforts of his descendants and disciples this sub-continent became such a Dar al-Hadith ("Home of Hadith") a parallel of which can be hardly found in other Islamic countries of that period.

Shah Sahib has written a short autobiographical treatise, entitled **Al-Juz al-Latif fi Tarjumat al-Abd al-Za'eef** from which an estimate of his achievements as a renovator can be made to some extent. He has stated :—

"I was born at the time at sunrise on Wednesday, the 4th Shawwal, A.H. 1114, and was chronogramatically named Azim al-Din.¹ Before my birth my parent and several pious men had seen dreams harbingering the happy news which some friends have collected in a treatise, entitled **Al-Qawl al-Jali**. At the age of five years I was sent to school (maktab). When I was seven, my august father made me say prayers and observe fasts. The same year I was circumcised and in the same seventh year I, having completed the reading of the holy Quran, began studying Persian until, in my tenth year, I had finished **Sharh-e Mulla Jami** and had acquired the ability to read books independently. At the age of 14, I was married and when I was 15, I vowed allegiance (bai'ah) to my august

¹ The numerical value of this name comes to 1115.

father and engaged myself in the spiritual “occupations” (ashghal) of great Sufi saints, particularly those belonging to the Naqshbandiyya order. In the same year, having studied a portion of the **Baizavi**, I, as it were, completed the syllabus current in this land. On this occasion my august father threw a feast on a grand scale, inviting the high and the low, and permitted me to do teaching work. From the course of arts and sciences current in this country, I read the following books lesson by lesson. In Hadith I read the **Mishkat** (except some portion from **Kitab al-Buyu'** – the Book of Sale Purchase – to the **Kitab al-Adaab** – the Book of Manners); the **Bukhari** up to the **Kitab al-Tahara** – the Book of Lustration; **Shama'il-e Tirmizi** complete; and a portion each of **Tafsir-e Baizavi** and **Tafsir-e Mudarik**. One of the very great bounties of Allah Most High bestowed on me was that, along with perfect deliberation and reflection and the study of different commentaries of the holy Quran, I received the grace to attend the lectures of my august father on the holy Quran, and thus I read the text of the holy Quran many times over under the instruction of my father, and practice proved to be the cause of the great success for me. Praise be to Allah for the same!

“In the science of jurisprudence, I studied **Sharh-e Waqaya** and **Hedaya**; in principles of jurisprudence, **Husami** and a sufficient portion of **Talweeh Tawzeeh**; in logic, **Sharh-e Shamsiah** complete; in scholastic theology, **Sharh-e Aqa'id** with **Hashia-e Khiyali** and a portion of **Sharh-e Mawaqif**; in the science of the mystic path and tasawwuf, **'Awarif** and **Rasa'il-e Naqshbandiyya**, etc.; in the science of realities, **Sharh-e Rubai'iyat-e Jami**, **Lawa'ih**, **Muqaddama-e Sharh-e Lama'at**, and **Muqaddama-e Naqd al-Nasus**; in the art of the properties of the Divine Names and Quranic verses, my august father's special collection; in the medical science, **Mu'ajjaz**; in philosophy, **Sharh-e Hedayat al-Hikma**, etc.; in syntax, **Kafiah** and **Sharh-e Jami**, in rhetorics, **Mutawwal** and that portion of **Mukhtasar al-Ma'ani** on which Mullah-zadeh has written a scholium; and in astronomy and mathematics, some brief treatises. Praise be to Allah that during this period of study I developed a special affinity to each subject and its main problems and important discussions came within the grasp of my intellect.

“When I was 17 years old, my august father went to glory. In his fatal sickness he gave me permission to receive allegiance and give guidance. After his death I kept myself engaged in teaching religious books and the rational sciences and got the opportunity to think over each art and science.

"In 1143/1730 my humble self was blessed with the performance of the hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca) and in 1144/1731, with the felicity of constant attendance (muja'warat) at the holy sanctuaries at Mecca and Madina, and of acquiring knowledge of Hadith from Shaikh Abu Tahir and other Shaikhs of the two holy cities. During my stay at Madina the sacred shrine (of the Holy Prophet) continued to be the main centre of my attention. Praise be to Allah that an endless wealth of graces and blessings was showered from this holy durbar on this fakir. Moreover, in this auspicious journey, I got the opportunity of coming into contact and enjoying the conversazioni of many of the ulema of the two sacred cities and of the Islamic world. Shaikh Abu Tahir awarded me a collective khirqah, the symbol of my initiation into all the Sufi orders. In late 1144/1731, I again had the honour of performing the hajj, and then in early 1145/1732, I undertook the return journey and reached my native-place exactly on Friday, 14th Rajab, A. H. 1145.

"The greatest reward of Allah Most High on this bondman of His is that he has been invested with the Inaugural Robe of Honour (**Khal 'at-e Fatihya**) and this last epoch (of religious revival) has been inaugurated through him. The works I have been made to perform in this connection are that the things that are 'muradda' (desirable, agreeable) in Fiqh have been brought together in it, and laying the foundation of Fiqh and Hadith anew, the entire edifice of this art has been rebuilt and the secrets and expedencies of all the commandments, persuasions and teaching have been so codified as none had done it like this before me.

"Another service exacted from me was that I proved in Fiqh the verity of the beliefs of the Ahl-e Sunnah with arguments and proofs and cleansed them thoroughly of all the rubbish of the rationalists' doubts and suspicions heaped on them; and, thank Allah. I have explained them in such a way that it leaves no scope for any more debate and controversy.

Practical wisdom too has been given to me abundantly and I also received the grace to conform and amplify it in accordance with the Book, the Sunnah and the examples of the Companions. Over and above these qualities, I have been gifted with the expertise whereby I can distinguish between what the original teachings of religion brought in fact by the Holy Prophet (Allah's peace and blessings be on him!) are and what are those things that are accretions or later additions as the result of interpolation of certain schismatic sects".¹

¹ **Risala al-Juz al-Latif**, pp. 26-28, Pub. Ahmedi Press.

To know the details and reality of the special works hinted at in the above-quoted lines by Shah Sahib, it is necessary to refer to his books.

Qualified with these accomplishments and peculiarities, when Shah Sahib stepped into the field of reviving religion, there is no doubt about it that he did a splendid work. The milieu in which Shah Sahib had seen the light was a very dismal period of moral and spiritual degeneration. Innovations and polytheistic deeds were in vogue in every house; the nobles and the affluent, over head and ears in luxury and enjoyment, had become apathetic to religion. Shah Sahib, surveying the conditions round about him, started his work of renovation; he resolved to disseminate and propagate the science of Hadith and played a matchless academic and intellectual role. He started teaching the Quran and Hadith in Madrasah-e Raheemiyyah, and, in this connection, he translated the holy Quran into Persian, the main language of the Muslims then, so as to make its benefit common. At the same time, writing **Hujjat Allahil Baligha** and other valuable books on conventionalism (taqlid) and casuistry (ijtehad), he tried to bring it home that the capacity for thinking and understanding on the Islamic lines be created. After him he left such successors who, in protecting the Islamic arts and sciences and their dissemination, discharged the dues of successorship. Nawab Siddiq Hasan Khan has written about this family: –

“Each one of them, in knowledge, practice, intellect, perception; oratorical power, eloquence in writing, piety, honesty, integrity and ranks of sainthood, is unrivalled, unique in the world and the phoenix of his age; and similarly, the descendants of the descendants of this house are all suns. This chain is of pure gold”.¹

¹ **Ittehaf al-Nabula al-Muttaqin ba-ahya-e Ma'athir al-Fuqaha wal-Muhaddithin**, p. 430, Pub. Nizami Press, Kanpur, A.H. 1288

THE CHAIN OF CREDENTIALS OF THE GREAT SAVANTS OF THE DAR AL-ULUM

In connection with the great ones of the Dar al-Ulum the personality who tops the list is the same Shah Wali Allah Dehelvi. Almost all the systems of the religious sciences in general and of the science of Hadith in particular that are current and extant in the subcontinent have originated from him. Whatever zest for theological sciences that exists from Peshawar to Ras Kumari is due to the grace of this household. It is the statement of a non-Indian religious divine that during his tour of India he did not meet any scholar of the science of Hadith who was not a disciple of Hazrat Shah Wali Allah through the medium of Hazrat Shah Abd al-Aziz.¹

Shah Sahib's family, by virtue of its knowledge and learning, abstinence and piety, was considered very distinguished in Delhi. His father, Shah Abd al-Raheem was one of the compilers of the **Fatawa Alamgiri**. As already stated in the foregone, he acquired knowledge from his father. At the age of 15 he had completed the course of the current sciences. Shah Sahib's chain of authority, through his august father, reaches back to Allamah Jalal al-Din Muhaqqiq Dawwani (d. 928/1521). In those days the element of rationalistic sciences was dominant in the syllabi in India. Hence to complete the study of the science of Hadith and to obtain the sanad of authority Shah Sahib undertook a journey to the holy cities (Mecca and Madina), and there he acquired the sanad for the correct recitation of the **Sihah** and narration of hadith from Shaikh Abu Tahir Madani and other illustrious Shaikhs. As regards Shah Sahib's inherent geist and capability, his teacher of Hadith, Shaikh Abu Tahir Madani's statement has been quoted supra that "Wali Allah obtains the sanad for the wordings of narration from me while I correct (my understanding of) the meanings of hadiths through him".

It was that period when the science of Hadith was passing through the last stage of enervation and deterioration. To propagate and to make current the science of Hadith in such a predicament is indeed a stupendous achievement of Shah Sahib which, a glorious divine of Egypt, Sayyid Rasheed Reza, had to acknowledge in the following words :-

"If the attention of our Indian divines had not been lavished on the science of Hadith in that period, then this science would have faded

¹ **Shah Wali Allah Ki Siyasi Tehrik**. p. 82 by Ubayd Allah Sindhi.

out of existence from the eastern countries, because from the 10th to the beginning of the 14th century hijri, this science had reached the last stage of decay in Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Hejaz.¹

Then, describing the condition of Egypt, he has stated :—

“When I migrated to Egypt in 1315/1897, I saw the khatibs of Jama-e Azhar and other mosques that they recite in their khutbas (sermons) such hadiths which are nowhere to be found in the tomes of Hadith. Among those hadiths (which they recite) there are ‘weak’, ‘disavowed’ (munkar), fabricated and counter-feit hadiths also. The same was the condition of the preachers, muftis and teachers”.²

Shah Sahib’s educational services are not confined to teaching only; he rather wrote such glorious books in different sciences the examples whereof are rarely found after the 8th century hijri. Besides this, of Shah Sahib’s academic life there are many more momentous achievements; to mention them here even briefly is not easy, for it is a separate topic.

Shah Sahib had four sons each one of whom was a bright star in the firmament of knowledge. The eldest amongst them was Shah Abd al-Aziz.

SHAH ABD AL-AZIZ

Hazrat Shah Abd al-Aziz (1159/1746–1239/1823) was the most erudite and glorious divine of his time. The dissemination of the sciences of the Quran and the Hadith that took place in his time – of course, through him – has had no precedent in the annals of Islamic India. There is no nook and corner in India where Shah Abd al-Aziz’s disciples may not be found. The statement of a non-Indian scholar has already been quoted above that during his travels in India he did not meet any scholar of Hadith who was not a disciple of Shah Sahib. Maulana Ubayd Allah Sindhi is of the view that if ten persons benefitted from the great qualities of Shah Wali Allah, from Shah Abd al-Aziz’s qualities must have benefitted at least ten thousand persons.³

In short, the foundation Hazrat Shah Wali Allah had laid for the renaissance of the religious sciences was brought to consummation by Hazrat

¹ *Muqaddama-e Miftah-e Kanuz al-Sunnah*, p. 4; Egypt.

² *Muqaddama-e Miftah-e Kanuz al-Sunnah*, p. 4; Egypt.

³ *Shah Wali Ki Siyasi Tehrik*. p. 64.

Shah Abd al-Aziz. He established such a standard of knowledge whereby the religious sciences came to attain a special honour and dignity. Shah Abd al-Aziz, after the death of his august father, served the cause of the religious sciences in Delhi for a long period of sixty years. Besides teaching, he wrote several books amongst which his **Tafsir-e Fath al-Aziz**, a commentary on the Quran, **Bustan al-Muhaddithin**, on the history of the classes of traditionists and their compilations, and the **Tuhfa-e Ithna 'Ashriya** on the reality of Shiaism : are really very famous. The last-named book is such an opus magnum of Shah Sahib that there exists no example thereof on this topic in the entire Islamic literature.

SHAH MUHAMMAD ISHAQ

Hazrat Shah Muhammad Ishaq was Hazrat Shah Abd al-Aziz's grandson (daughter's son) and a distinguished pupil. In the presence of Shah Abd al-Aziz he taught Hadith to the students for twenty years. In 1239/1823, Shah Abd al-Aziz, entrusting Madrasah-e Raheemiyyah before his death to Shah Muhammad Ishaq, appointed him as his successor. Till 1257/1841 he rendered the service of disseminating and propagating the science of Hadith. Almost the whole of India benefitted from his educational graces. He translated the **Mishkat al-Masabeeh** into Urdu, which, at his instance, was transformed into a commentary by his well-guided pupil, Maulana Qutub al-Din Khan, and is known as **Mazahir-e Haq. Mi'at Masa'il** and **Rasa'il-e Arba'een** are also his noteworthy works. Emigrating from India in 1257/1841 to Mecca, he settled down there and died after a few years.

It is stated in **Tarjuma-e Tazkira-e Ulama-e Hind**: "It is particularly notable that during the freedom fight of 1857 most of the pupils of Shah Muhammad Ishaq Dehelvi took part as ulema in this movement, the most noteworthy amongst them being Mufti 'Inayat Ahmed Kakorvi (Sadar Amin, Bareilly), Maulana Abd al-Jalil Ko'ili (Aligarhi), Mufti Sadar al-Din Azurda, Shah Abu Sa'eed Mujaddidi (father of Shah Abd al-Ghani Mujaddidi) and the pupils of their pupils, i.e., the ulema of Deoband, e.g., Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautavi, Maulana Rasheed Ahmed Gangohi, Maulana Muhammad Mazhar Nanautavi, Maulana Muhammad Munir Nanautavi etc.¹

SHAH ABD AL-GHANI

After Hazrat Shah Muhammad Ishaq's emigration the honour of his

¹ **Tarjuma-e Tazkira Ulama-e Hind**, p. 409, Karachi.

successorship fell to the lot of Hazrat Shah Abd al-Ghani Mujaddidi (1235/1819-1296/1878). Shah Abd al-Ghani studied some books of Hadith under his father, Shah Abu Sa'eed, who was a pupil of Shah Abd al-Aziz, and obtained the sanad of some books from Shah Muhammad Ishaq. He, during his time, despite his young age, was an incomparable scholar of Hadith. Scholars and students used to come to him from every corner of the country and used to take pride in gleaning from "this harvest of accomplishment". His school was the greatest centre of the science of Hadith in India. He wrote a scholium on **Ibn Majah** which is known as **Injah al-Haja**. Through his educational grace were produced peerless ulema like Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautavi, Hazrat Maulana Rasheed Ahmed Gangohi and Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Yaqub Nanautavi, who infused a new life into the world of knowledge.

In the upheaval of 1857 this greatest institution of the science of Hadith was ravaged by the accidents of time and came to an end for good. Shah Abd al-Ghani emigrated to Madina and there he passed away in the month of Muharram, A. H. 1296.

The details of the sanad of narration of the above-mentioned scholars are given fully in **Al-Yan'e al-Jani**.

Regarding Hazrat Shah Abd al-Ghani, Maulana Hakim Abd al-Hayy Lakhnavi writes in his **Nuzhat al-Khwatir** as under :-

"Knowledge and practice, asceticism, forbearance, truthfulness, trustworthiness, chastity, self-preservation, bona fides, sincerity, resorting to Allah, fear of Allah, conformance to the prophetic sunnah, excellent morals, spiritual communion (muraqaba), benevolence to the people and disinclination to worldly assets;- of such qualities he was exclusively the last paragon. Many ulema and Shaikhs benefitted from the blessings of his majlis and his teachings. All the people of India and Arabia are unanimous as regards his greatness and saintliness. On Wednesday, the 6th of Muharram, A.H. 1296, he died at Madina and was laid to rest there".¹

Another line of the ulema of Deoband, through their pupillage to Hazrat Maulana Mamluk Ali Nanautavi and Maulana Rasheed al-Din Khan Dehelvi, reaches back to Shah Abd al-Aziz. The details thereof are as under :-

¹ **Nuzhat al-Khwatir**, vol. vii, pp. 289-90.

MAULANA MAMLUK ALI

The teacher of teachers, Hazrat Maulana Mamluk Ali Nanautavi was one of the famed ulema of his time, commanding a distinctive position among his contemporary divines. On text-books, particularly those of Fiqh, he had such mastery that he remembered most of the books by heart. The condition of his memory was such that the late Sir Sayyid (Ahmed Khan) writes: "He has had complete proficiency in the rational and the traditional sciences and he can recall the text-books so thoroughly that, suppose, if the treasury of knowledge is emptied of all these books, it is possible to reproduce them from the tablet of his memory. Over and above this perfection and merit, his politeness and forbearance are beyond words".¹

He was one of the well-guided pupils of Maulana Rasheed al-Din Khan. The circle of his educational beneficence (i.e., the circle of students and disciples) was very extensive. His inspiring art of teaching produced innumerable scholars. Maulana Ashiq Ilahi Meeruthi has stated:

"Maulana Mamluk Ali, who had studied most of the text-books under the instruction of "the Moon of India" Hazrat Maulana Rasheed al-Din Khan, a disciple of Hazrat Shah Abd al-Aziz, was himself the teacher of such holy and famous personages and "the Suns of the Sky of Knowledge" as Hazrat Maulana Rasheed Ahmed Gangohi, Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautavi, Maulana Muhammad Mazhar, Dean of Mazahir-e Ulum, and Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Yaqub Nanautavi, Dean of the Dar al-Ulum. All these gentlemen had quenched the thirst for religious sciences and the literary arts from this surging ocean, and driven from pillar to post they had at last found cure and satisfaction at this very threshold".²

Maulavi Karim al-Din Panipati writes:-

"The new Arabic madrasah is stable due to him. He has had perfect mastery over all the three languages: Persian, Urdu and Arabic; and is fully proficient in all the arts and sciences found in these languages. When a book of any subject is translated from English into Urdu, his keen mind grasps its fundamental principle so quickly as if he was

¹ *Athar al-Sanadid*, pt. iv p. 70.

² *Tazkirat al-Khalil*, p. 9.

conversant with this subject from the very beginning.¹ In the work he has been appointed for, he has, as far as possible, never shown any default. So much benefit has been caused in the madrasah by his beneficent being that perhaps it might not have accrued from any teacher in any time".²

This teacher of the teachers was the resort of students who, flocking to him from all over, used to derive academic benefit. Besides the college hours, there used to be a throng of students at his residence during his leisure-time. Maulavi Karim al-Din writes :-

"His house is the resort of students, his college the assemblage of ulema and scholars; hundreds of students, deriving benefit from his blessed being went as scholars to different parts of India. Besides teaching the college-students, he teaches books of every subject to other people at his residence. All his precious time till the dead of night, is divided over the teaching of students. Hundreds of students flock to him from far and near for being educated in different sciences and it is far from his affability that he might disappoint any student".³

Hazrat Gangohi's statement has been reported in **Tazkirat al-Rasheed** as follows :-

"In the beginning we used to study under other teachers but we did not feel satisfied. Sometimes the lesson used to be short and sometimes we would not receive a reply to the searchings of our hearts. But when we reached the presence of Maulana Mamluk Ali, we got satisfied and finished the books within a short time, as if he had poured them into our throats in the form of a mixture, There were several good teachers

¹ It is stated in Arwah-e Salasa that "when Maulana Mamluk Ali Nanautavi went to Delhi to prosecute studies, it so happened that under whichever teacher he started reading, the latter, sensing want of aptitude in him (the student), would not teach him another lesson after the first. This situation kept him very sad and gloomy. Worrying about his inaptitude, he, one day went to the presence of Hazrat Shah Abd al-Aziz and said: "Leaving my native-place I have come here with the eagerness to acquire knowledge but the state of things is such that under whichever teacher I begin to read, he does not wish to teach me any more after the first lesson". "Well, come tomorrow", said Shah Sahib. Next day the Maulana called upon him and Shah Sahib taught him one lesson from Hedayat al-Nahv and said: "Go; now under whichever teacher you study, he will not refuse to teach". Accordingly, he developed such aptitude and made such progress that very great ulema later on became his pupils". (Anecdote No. 185)

² **Tazkira-e Tabaqat al-Shu'ara**, p. 463.

³ **Tazkira-e Faraid al-Dahr** by M. Karim al-Din, p. 402.

in Delhi in those days but such teachers who might have complete grasp of the meaning and instil it into the student's mind by lecturing on it in different ways, were only two : one was our teacher Maulana Mamluk Ali and the other, also our teacher, Mufti Sadar al-Din Azurda. (Allah's mercy be on them !)".

As regards Hazrat Maulana Mamluk Ali's academic insight and perception, Maulana Muhammad Yaqub Nanautavi has written that

"before him it was difficult to make progress without grasping the meaning (of a lesson) because he used to make out from the diction whether this fellow (student) has grasped the meaning or not".¹

To compute the number of the pupils of Hazrat Ustaz al-asatiza (the teacher of teachers) is very difficult. Amongst his pupils the names of great ulema like Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautavi, Maulana Rasheed Ahmed Gangohi, Maulana Muhammad Yaqub Nanautavi, Maulana Muhammad Mazhar Nanautavi, Maulana Ahmed Ali Saharanpuri, Maulana Shaikh Muhammad Thanvi, Maulana Zulfiqar Ali Deobandi, Maulana Fazl al-Rahman Deobandi, Maulana Muhammad Munir Nanautavi, Maulavi Jamal al-Din Madar al-Muham of Bhopal (chief-minister of the erstwhile Bhopal state), Maulavi Karim al-Din Panipati, compiler of the **Tazkira-e Tabaqat al-Shu'ara**, Shams al-Ulama Dr. Zia al-Din, L.L.D., Maulana Alim Ali Moradabadi, Maulavi Sam'ee Allah Dehelvi, Maulana Abd al-Rahman Panipati, etc., are especially noteworthy.

It is stated in **Sawanh-e Maulana Muhammad Ahsan Nanautavi** that Hazrat Maulana Mamluk Ali had translated the first four and the eleventh and twelfth discourses of Euclid from Arabic. Besides this, he is also reported to have translated the **Tirmizi** and **Tarikh-e Yamini**.

He was professor of Arabic sciences in the Delhi College. He died on 11th Zil-hijja 1267/1851, and lies buried in Shah Wali Allah's grave yard, 'Mihndiyun', in front of the mosque. His grave is now untraceable.

MAULANA RASHEED AL-DIN KHAN

He was Hazrat Shah Rafi' al-Din's disciple. In the rational and the traditional sciences, particularly in scholastic theology, he was a matchless scholar of his time. Shah Sahib had taught and trained him as his own son, always thinking of and trying to reform and improve him. After Shah Rafi' al-Din, Shah Abd al-Aziz and Shah Abd al-Qadir taught and trained him.

¹ **Sawanh-e Qasimi**, p. 7, Pub: Mujtabai, Delhi, 1311/1894.

Though Maulana Rasheed al-Din Khan had had perfect proficiency in all sorts of subjects, he had acquired special expertise in astronomy and mathematics, and in those days hardly any man would dare to compete with him in these subjects. He had a prodigious knack in eristic and was an unrivalled litterateur in the Arabic language.

Besides his knowledge and learning, Maulana Rasheed al-Din's asceticism (zuhd) and piety (taqwa) were also acknowledged. He used to live a contented life. Once the post of a judge was offered to him but he declined to accept it. In 1825 when the famous Madrasa-e Ghazi al-Din of Delhi was changed into a college, he was appointed as the head-teacher of Arabic in it. He used to get a salary of Rs. 100/- p.m. but, being magnanimous by nature, he would help, as far as he could, any needy man who approached him. He died in 1249/1833 at nearly seventy years of age.

SHAH RAFI' AL-DIN

He was Shah Abd al-Aziz's younger brother and an illustrious divine of the Wali Allahian family. He was born in 1163/1749. When Shah Abd al-Aziz was no more able to teach due to several ailments and loss of sight, he appointed Shah Rafi' al-Din in his place. Scholars and students used to flock to Delhi from far off places to derive benefit from Shah Sahib. He was a versatile genius, having mastery over every subject and this peculiarity of his was famous that to the teaching of whichever subject he turned his attention, it seemed as if that very subject was his speciality. As regard's his command over mathematics, Shah Abd al-Aziz used to remark that

"Maulavi Rafi' al-Din has advanced so much in mathematics that perhaps its inventor too must not have advanced so much".¹

At another place he says:-

"There must be no match to Maulavi Rafi' al-Din in India and abroad in the subject of mathematics".²

Amongst his works the Urdu translation of the holy Quran, **Muqaddamat al-Ilm**, **Takmil al-Azhan**, **Asrar al-Muhabbat**, and **Qiyamat Nama**

¹ **Athas al-Sanadid**, pt. iv, p, 51.

² **Malfuzat-e Shah Abd al-Aziz**, p. 40 & **Kamalat-e Azizi**, p. 56.

are very famous. He died in 1233/1817 and lies in eternal rest in his family graveyard.

The late Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan writes:-

“All the reputed scholars of India are the beneficiaries of his (Shah Rafi’ al-Din’s) grace-gifting person. He had such aptitude with each subject that he used to teach diverse subjects and different sciences at one and the same time. When he diverted his attention from the teaching of one to that of another the audience would feel as if the dress of uniqueness in the same subject had been cut for the body of his talent. These accomplishments notwithstanding, his imparting of the esoteric grace was such that had Junayd of Baghdad and Hasan of Basra lived in his time they would have indubitably considered themselves the lowest beneficiaries”.

MAULANA MUHAMMAD QASIM NANAUTAVI

He is amongst the last gleaners of the Wali Allahian harvest of knowledge. He was born in 1248/1832. In the environs of Saharanpur there is an old village, Nanauta,¹ reputed for producing men of high calibre. It was from this productive mine that this unique jewel of the first water came out whose scintillating knowledge illumined and made resplendent the academic and religious assemblies in the later half of the 13th century hijri. Primary education he received at his native-place after which he was sent to Deoband where he read for some time in Maulavi Mehtab Ali’s primary school. Then he went away to his maternal grandfather at Saharanpur where the latter was practising as a pleader. In Saharanpur he studied the elementary books of Arabic grammar and syntax under the instruction of Maulavi Nawaz. At the end of 1259/1843. Maulana Mamluk Ali took him to Delhi. There he began the **Kafia** and read other books. Thereafter he was admitted to the Delhi College but he did not take the annual examination. Maulana Muhammad Yaqub Nanautavi writes :-

“My late father got Maulavi Sahib admitted to the Government. Arabic Madrasah² and said: ‘See Euclid yourself and do exercises of ari-

¹ Nanauta is an old village 16 miles west of Deoband. A distinguished family of Siddique Shaikhs has settled here since 9th century hijri. Hazrat Nanautavi belongs to this family genealogically.

² Delhi College, which Maulana Muhammad Yaqub Nanautavi calls “Madrasah-e Arabi Sarkari”, was formerly known as Madrasa-e Ghazi al-Din. Ghazi al-Din Firoze Jang ! (d. 1122/1710) had established it a few years before his death outside Ajmeri Gate. Firoze Jang I. after his death, was buried in the

thmetic. After some days it was talked about that Maulavi Sahib had seen all the ordinary discourses and had completed the exercises of arithmetic. Munshi Zaka Allah brought some questions which were very difficult. On solving them Maulana became very well-known. When the annual examination drew near, Maulavi Sahib did not take it and left the madrasah. All in the madrasah, particularly the head-master who was the principal English teacher, regretted this very much".¹

Before entering Delhi College, he had read books of logic, philosophy and scholastic theology like **Mir Zahid, Qazi Mubarak, Sadra, Shams-e Bazigha** under the instruction of Maulana Mamluk Ali at the latter's house. In the end he joined that study-circle which then possessed a central position in the whole of India with regard to the teaching of the sciences of the Quran and Hadith. Hazrat Shah Abd al-Ghani Mujaddidi was then gracing the masnad of knowledge of Shah Wali Allah. From him he acquired the science of Hadith; during his student-days itself the fame of his acuteness, knowledge and learning, comprehension and discernment had become widespread.

Hazrat Maulana Nanautavi's illustrious contemporary, Sir Sayyid, has expressed his impressions of the former's acuteness, knowledge and

(Footnote from the previous page continued)

courtyard of the same madrasah. His grave is still extant. He was the father of Nizam al-Mulk Asaf Jah I. The ruling family of the erstwhile Hyderabad State in the Deccan descended from the same Asaf Jah I.

The double-storeyed building of red stone of Madrasah Ghazi al-Din, by the prevailing standard of that time, was very grand and magnificent. In 1825 (A.H. 1241) the East India Company changed it into Delhi College. Mr. J. H. Taylor was appointed as its first principal. In 1828 (A.H. 1244) an English class was opened in this college and modern sciences were included in the course. Before this it was an Arabic madrasah of the oriental type.

In 1842 (A.H. 1258) the Delhi College was shifted from the Ajmeri Gate to a big building near Kashmiri Gate, where it continued till 1857. During the violent disturbances of 1857 the college was destroyed and Mr. Taylor was killed. He had been attached to this college for nearly 30 years. In 1890 (A.H. 1308), it was restarted under the name of Anglo-Arabic College in the same old building of Madrasah Ghazi al-Din (old Delhi College). (Extracted from "**Waqeat-e Dar al-Hukumat-e Delhi**" vol. ii, pp. 562-573; by Bashir al-Din Ahmed; pub. by Shamsi Press, 1237/1919.

Now for some years this college has been renamed Dr. Zakir Husain College.

(Sayyid Mahboob Rizvi).

¹ **Sawanh-e Qasimi**, p. 4; pub. by Muftabai Press, Delhi, 1894 (A.H. 1311). Who was this head-master? Maulavi Abd al-Haq writes in his *Marhum Delhi College*: Mr. Taylor worked as head-master in Delhi College for 30 years and was also its principal for two, three years' (p. 157). Mr. Taylor was killed in the upheaval of 1857. His head-mastership began in 1825 (A.H. 1241). Hazrat Nanautavi went to Delhi in 1259/1843 for higher studies. So at that time, the same Mr. Taylor could be the head-master.

learning, asceticism and piety, understanding and discernment during student days in the following words :-

“The people thought that after Maulavi Muhammad Ishaq no man like him in all those qualities was to be born, but Maulavi Muhammad Qasim has proved by his consummate righteousness, religiosity, piety, abstinence and humility that, through the education and training of this city of Delhi, Allah has created another man a like of Maulavi Muhammad Ishaq, rather superior to him in certain things.

“There are many people alive who have seen Maulavi Muhammad Qasim receiving education at Delhi at a very young age. He had studied all the books under the late Maulavi Mamluk Ali. From the very beginning the signs of piety, abstinence, virtuousness and devotion to God were apparent from his ways and manners and the following couplet was perfectly applicable to him :-

‘Over his head through his intelligence was shining the star of loftiness’.

“During the period of prosecuting studies, even as he was well-known and reputed for his intelligence, keenness of mind, understanding and discernment, he was equally well spoken of by men of learning and accomplishments for his virtuousness and devoutness. Maulavi Muzaffar Husain Sahib’s company had inclined him very much towards conformance to the prophetic sunnah, and the grace of the company of Haji Imdad Allah had made his heart into a top-ranking heart. He himself conformed to the Shari’ah and the sunnah and tried his level best to make people also conform to the Shari’ah and the sunnah. Nevertheless, he was always anxious about the weal of the Muslims. It was through his efforts that a very useful madrasah for imparting the education of religious sciences was established at Deoband and a very fine mosque was also built. Besides this, through his effort and endeavour, Islamic madrasahs were established at other places too. He did not at all wish to be a mystagogue, a spiritual preceptor, and yet, thousands of people in India, particularly in the northern and western districts, believed in him and considered him to be their spiritual leader.

“As regards controversial questions some people were displeased with him and he too was displeased with some, but as far as we understand we cannot impute any action of Maulavi Muhammad Qasim, whether it be of displeasure with anyone or of pleasure, to egoism, obduracy and antagonism. All the works and deeds that he performed were purely for God’s sake and with an eye on the recompense of the hereafter; and he

used to follow whatever he considered true, and right. Both, to be displeased or to be pleased with anyone; were for the sake of God. Maulavi Muhammad Qasim did not consider any man good or bad due to his personal relations but because a man does bad works or speaks bad things, he considered him bad for the sake of God. The question of 'love for the sake of Allah' and 'aversion for the sake of Allah' was peculiar to his treatment. All his habits were angelic. We all used to cherish sincere love for him, and such a man who may have passed his life with such virtuousness is indubitably worthy of utmost love.

"In these days all people admit and perhaps those people too who dissented from him in certain open questions might be admitting that Maulavi Muhammad Qasim was a matchless man in this world. His rank in sciential knowledge in those days may perhaps be, less than that of Shah Abd al-Aziz to some extent, otherwise in all other things it was superior. In humility, virtue and simplicity, if his rank was not higher than that of Maulavi Muhammad Ishaq, it was not inferior either. He was really a man of angelic habits and celestial disposition, and the world's being bereaved of the existence of such a man is the cause of extreme sorrow and regret for those who survive after him".¹

After the completion of his education, Maulana Nanautavi took up as a means of livelihood the work of correcting the press at Matba-e Ahmedi,² Delhi, which was then owned by Maulana Ahmed Ali Muhaddith Saharanpuri.³ In those days, at Maulana Ahmed Ali's instance, he also wrote a scholium on the last few portions of the **Sahih Bukhari**.

¹ The late Sir Sayyid's article in **Aligarh Institute Gazette**, dated April 24. 1880. pp. 467-8. For details, vide this writer's article entitled **Hazrat Nanautavi Sir Sayyid Ki Nazar Men** included in **Sawan-e Qasimi**, vol. iii.

² Matba-e Ahmedi, Delhi, was a great centre for the printing and publishing of the books of Hadith: a pioneer press publishing books of hadith for the first time in India. Accordingly, Jam'e Tirmizi in 1265/1848, Sahih Bukhari in 1270/1853, and Mishkat al-Masabeeh in 1271/1854 were published with great care. This press Maulana Ahmed Ali had established in 1262/1845 after his return from Hejaz. After the revolt of 1857, it was shifted to Meerut. This writer has seen the copies of Sahih Bukhari and Mishkat al-Masabeeh printed by this press, in the library of the Dar al-Ulum. As regards their marginalia it is my opinion that they are from the pen of Maulana Ahmed himself; however, the text of the hadiths seems to have been written by the copy-writer.

³ Maulana Ahmed Ali Muhaddith Saharanpuri was born in 1225/1810 in Saharanpur. He studied under Maulana Mamluk Ali and Maulana Wajih al-Din. He acquired the knowledge of Hadith in Mecca from Hazrat Shah Muhammad Ishaq Dehelvi in this manner that sitting in the Haram from dawn (Fajr) till noon (Zuhr), he would first copy down the hadiths and then from Zuhr till Asr (afternoon), he would wait upon Shah Sahib and listen to the transcribed hadiths. All the books of Hadiths he read before Shah Sahib like this only.

Maulana Muhammad Yaqub Nanautavi writes :-

“Maulavi Ahmed Ali Saharanpuri entrusted the last five or six remaining portions of the **Bukhari Sharif** for commentation and collation, and he has written it so well that now let the readers assess as to what else can be better than this. At that time some people who were not aware of Maulavi Sahib's talent had told Maulavi Ahmed Ali by way of an objection as to what it was that he did that he entrusted the work to a novice; and Maulana Ahmed Ali had then retorted that he was not that simple that he would have done so without consideration and understanding. And then Maulana Ahmed Ali showed them the scholium written by Maulavi Sahib wherefore the people came to recognise his ability. And that portion in the Bukhari is the toughest, particularly because of the undertaking for the Hanafite method (mazhab) from the very beginning, and it is there that Imam Bukhari has taken exceptions to the Hanafite method and Maulavi Sahib has given the answers there. It is known how difficult they are. Now whoever desires, let him see that place and realize what kind of scholium has been written; and it was also an undertaking in this scholium not to write anything without authentication from books and from merely one's understanding.¹

(Footnote from the previous page continued)

After completing education, he came back to India and engaged in teaching Hadith. Simultaneously he also published **Jam'e Tirmizi** from his own press in 1265/1848. After collating **Sahih Bukhari** and **Mishkat al-Masabeeh** with MSS., he got them printed with utmost care in 1270/1853 and 1271/1854 respectively. He also wrote marginalia on these books. The collation, redaction and commentation of the **Sahih Bukhari** took ten years. These were the maiden prints of Hadith-books in India. Maulana Ahmed Ali spent all his life in teaching and printing the books of Hadith. He was a great religious divine and an illustrious traditionist of his time. Outstanding contemporary ulema like Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautavi, Maulana Sayyid Muhammad Ali Mongryi and Allahmah Shibli Naumani belonged to the circle of his pupils. According to Allahmah Shibli, most of the great Hanafite ulema of that era were his students.

He earned his livelihood through the press and by dealing in books. Along with the wealth of knowledge, Allah had enriched him with worldly wealth also, which he used to spend lavishly on the poor and the students. In the last phase of his life he used to teach Tafsir and Hadith to the students in Madrasah Mazahir-e Ulum, Saharanpur. He was extremely complaisant, self-effacing and contented. His academic and financial favours went a long way in the progress of the said Madrasah from which he never took any remuneration for services rendered.

He died on 6th Jamadi al-Awwal, 1297/1880 in Saharanpur and lies in eternal sleep in his ancestral graveyard near the Idgah.

For the details of his life, see this writer's article in Burhan (monthly), Delhi, of November, 1974. (S. M. Rizvi).

¹ **Sawanh-e Qasimi**, p. 9, Pub.: Matba-e Mujtabai. Delhi. 1311/1894.

There is no clarification in any biography of Hazrat Nanautavi as to when he completed his education and in which year he happened to collate the **Sahih Bukhari** and write a scholium on it. Only this much is known briefly from **Sawanh-e Qasimi** that soon after completing the scholastic education (lit., the current curriculum) he had started the work of collating and correcting the press in Matba-e Ahmedi, Delhi. During the last phase of this period (1267/1851), Maulana Mamluk Ali had died. Maulana Muhammad Yaqub Nanautavi has written in **Sawanh-e Qasimi** as under :—

“During this time my father died on 11th Zil-hijja, 1267/1851. After his death I shifted to my own house. Maulavi Sahib (Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Qasim) also came over to live with me. In the upper storey was lying a loose bedstead on which he used to keep lying. Till nearly one year after my father’s demise I lived in Delhi. Then, due to the service in Ajmer, I had to leave Delhi. Maulavi Sahib lived alone for some time in that house, then in the printing-press, and then for some days in Dar al-Baqa. It was during that period when Maulavi Ahmed Ali Saharanpuri entrusted the last five or six remaining portions of the **Bukhari Sharif** to Maulavi Sahib for commentation and collation”.¹

THE PERIOD OF WRITING THE SCHOLIUM ON BUKHARI SHARIF

It becomes clear from the arrangement of facts in Maulana Muhammad Yaqub Nanautavi’s statement that Hazrat Nanautavi had completed his education before 1267/1851. After Zil-hijja 1268/1852, he passed nearly one year at Maulana Muhammad Yaqub Nanautavi’s house and at the end of 1268/1852, when the latter went to join his service at Ajmer, he (Hazrat Nanautavi) lived at other places for some days, and it was during this period that the work of writing the scholium was entrusted to him.

As regards Hazrat Nanautavi’s class-mate, Maulana Rasheed Ahmed Gangohi, it is known for certain that he stayed in Delhi for four years and, completing his education in 1265/1848, he went back to his native-place.² Hence Hazrat Nanautavi’s year of completion of studies can be this year (A.H. 1265) only. Thus, he, as if, had finished his education at the seventeenth year.

It is stated at the end of that edition of the **Sahih Bukhari**, which came out in 1322/1904 from the Matba-e Mujtabai of Delhi, that

¹ **Sawanh-e Qasimi**, p. 9.

² **Tazkirat al-Rasheed**, vol. i, p. 35.

“the printer made it a general edition and thereafter his sons who have had sufficient share of the rational and the traditional sciences and Muhammadan morals, published it in 1284/1867 and then again in 1308/1890”.

It says in **Hayat-e Shibli** that the **Sahih Bukhari** was first published in 1267/1850. The statement therein is :-

“The main achievement of Maulana Saharanpuri is that with immense labour he collated, printed and published the manuscripts of Hadith books. Accordingly, he published the **Jam’e Tirmizi** in 1265/1848 and the **Sahih Bukhari** in 1267/1850. The late Maulana Shibli used to say that his late teacher had spent full twenty years in collating the Bukhari and in writing its scholium.¹

According to this writer, the date of printing given in the Muṣṭabai² edition of the **Sahih Bukhari** seems to be more accurate. The chronogram derived by Maulavi Muhammad Umar bin Maulavi Ahmed Sa’eed al-Mujaddidi and mentioned at the end of the **Sahih Bukhari** is “Qad tab’a asahho kutubin b’ada kitabillah”, the numerical value of which comes to 1270.

¹ **Hayat-e Shibli**, 2nd ed., p. 85; Dar al-Musannafin, Azamgarh.

² Matba-e Muṣṭabai, Delhi, has been a celebrated press in India. It had been initially started at Meerut by Munshi Mumtaz Ali. After the riotous revolution of 1857 (A.H. 1274), when Matba-e Ahmedi, Delhi, came to an end, Hazrat Nanautavi was employed by this Matba for the collation and correction of books. In 1285/1868, when Munshi Sahib went for hajj, Maulavi Abd al-Hadi (d. A.D. 1914) obtained proprietary rights over the Matba-e Muṣṭabai and thereafter printed a small-sized copy of the Holy Quran from the plates prepared by Munshi Mumtaz Ali (for his own publication—**Ashrafi-wall Hama’il**), and also published **Malfuzat-e Shah Abd al-Aziz Dehelvi** and Shah Sahib’s another book, **Mizan al-Balagha**, etc. After him, his son, Maulana Qazi Bashir al-Din (d. A.D. 1945) ran this press and published some useful books like **Tazkira-e Azizia**, etc. This press was closed down after the partition of the country.

In 1286/1869, after returning from hajj, Munshi Mumtaz Ali re-established Matab-e Muṣṭabai, this time at Delhi instead of Meerut. In 1304/1886, he emigrated to Mecca, selling his press for Rs. 500/- to Maulavi Abd al-Ahad. In 1920 (A.H. 1339), after Maulavi Abd al-Ahad’s demise, Matba-e Muṣṭabai was divided amongst his several sons and when the whole family emigrated to Pakistan in 1947 (A.H. 1366), the press ceased to exist. Matba-e Muṣṭabai was situated in Delhi near the Jama Masjid in Mohalla Churiwalan.

Maulavi Abd al-Ahad improved Matba-e Muṣṭabai, Delhi, very much. In respect of accuracy, books printed in this press were considered very valuable. Its publications were much sought after for private collections of bibliophiles and institutional libraries.

Thousands of books in Arabic, Persian and Urdu were printed and published

According to the aforesaid details, the year 1269/1852 alone can be the year when Hazrat Nanautavi collated and wrote scholium on the last five or six portions of the Sahih Bukhari.

The year of his birth is 1248/1832 and hence at the time of correcting and writing the scholium his age can be at the most 21 years. Maulana Manazir Ahsan Gilani has ambiguously shown it to be 22 or 23 years. He has stated: "Most probably, his respectable self's age must not have been more than 22 or 23 years".¹

The people who were not aware of Hazrat Nanautavi's genius should have been necessarily surprised at this assignment to a young man of a momentous academic work like the collation and correction of and scholium-writing on the **Sahih Bukhari**; but the mature vision of Maulana Ahmed Ali had adequately recognised the uncommon savoir faire and erudition of this pupil.

THE METHOD OF TEACHING HADITH

Hazrat Nanautavi has played a great part in developing that method of affirmation and preference for Hanafite mazhab (method, creed) and that style of sifting and explanations which are today the distinctive feature of the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, and are also current and in use more or less in the lessons of hadith in the Arabic madrasahs. Till the middle of the thirteenth century hijri only the translation of hadith and the stating of the four methods (mazahib-e arba'a) was considered enough; but when the Hanafites were accused by the Ahl-e Hadith very emphatically that their method was not in accordance with Hadith, Hazrat Shah Muhammad Ishaq and some of his learned disciples paid

(Footnote from the previous page Continued)

by Matba-e Mujaibai, Delhi. Almost all the text-books of the Nizami Curriculum used to be printed at this press. In short, this press has rendered a great service to the Islamic arts and sciences.

Excellent and qualified ulema used to collate, redact, correct the press and write scholia in this press, amongst them the names of Maulana Muhammad Ahsan Nanautavi, Maulana Muhammad Munir Nanautavi, Maulana Nizam al-Din Keranvi, Maulana Khalil al-Rahman Burhanpuri, Maulavi Muhammad Ishaq and Maulavi Muhammad Beg are noteworthy.

Yusuf Bukhari Dehelvi has stated : "Next to Matba-e Nawal Kishore, Lucknow, if any other press achieved immortal fame, it was only Matba-e Mujaibai, Delhi. It printed dozens of editions and millions of copies. It is such a great exploit that today our libraries are seen full of books of various arts and sciences" (Maulana M. Ahsan Nanautavi, p. 161 & Sawanh-e Qasimi & "Yeh Dilli Hai" by Yusuf Bukhari, p. 103.

¹ Sawanh-e Qasimi, vol. i, p. 351, National Press, Deoband.

attention to the affirmation and superiority (tarjih) of the Hanafite method. In the Dar al-Ulum Hazrat Nanautavi, Hazrat Shaikh al-Hind and other ulema developed it to such an extent that today no teaching institution of Hadith of repute is to be found devoid of it.

From Hazrat Nanautavi's lectures only those students could benefit adequately who were themselves talented, intelligent and sharp-witted and, moreover, might have already read the book with close attention. Hazrat Nanautavi's geist, maturity of vision and power of argumentation can be estimated on the whole from his books. His statement was that "all the commandments of the Book and the Sunnah are wholly rational; however, the intellect of every person cannot have access there". Hakim Mansoor Ali Khan Moradabadi, who is amongst the well-guided pupils of Hazrat Nanautavi, writes in his **Mazhab-e Mansoor** about the peculiarities of his teacher's giving lessons and lectures as under :—

"The fact is that whenever Hazrat Nanautavi proved any important and difficult proposition to be contrary to the masses' concepts, great men of light and learning used to be amazed and astonished. The commandment which looked absolutely without any argument and demonstration used to look perfectly rational after his lecture. Great men of knowledge and learning would not dare to say anything against the arguments put forth by him".¹

The following statement of Hazrat Shaikh al-Hind has been mentioned in the **Arwah-e Salasa**; he says :-

"I used to attend Hazrat Nanautavi's lecture after having read Hazrat Shah Wali Allah's books and would ask him those things which used to be very difficult in the Shah Sahib's books. And what used to be the last answer in Shah Sahib's books, Hazrat (Nanautavi) would mention it first. I have experienced this thing several times".²

During the incipient period of the Dar al-Ulum he taught Euclid for some days in the Chhatta Mosque. During teaching whenever he felt it necessary to explain a figure to the students, he would draw the figure with his finger, without the help of instruments and explain it to the students, although he had studied mathematics and Euclid in Delhi College by himself, without the guidance of any teacher. Hazrat Nanautavi's lecture generally used to be within the four walls of the

¹ **Mazhab-e Mansoor**, vol. ii. p. 175.

² **Arwah-e Salasa**, Anecdote No. 34.

printing presses and was attended by particular persons only. The grace of his teaching produced such a party of accomplished, illustrious ulema like Hazrat Shaikh al-Hind Maulana Mahmud Hasan Deobandi, Maulana Ahmed Hasan Amrohi, Maulana Fakh al-Hasan Gangohi, etc. the example whereof is not to be seen after Hazrat Shah Abd al-Ghani's time. And then he established the system of religious sciences through the central educational institution like the Dar al-Ulum, which now, due to its variegated quality, is the greatest seminary in Asia.

Some peculiarities of Hazrat Maulana Nanautavi's teaching-work are very important. A great one among them is that he never made it a means of earning his living. Due to not being rich, he, at necessity, adopted a service for earning his livelihood, but, instead of the educational line, he sought a job of collation and emendation of books in a press; and then, contrary to the general wont, instead of increment in pay, he used to insist on decrement, and used to be content with such little pay, a mere pittance, on which he could subsist with great difficulty. He never agreed to take more than ten, fifteen rupees as pay. The highest post during the time that could be given to an Indian could be his — as Maulana Muhammad Yaqub has said — 'at the slightest wink of his eyes'; as such, many of those who were his contemporaries during the educational career and were far inferior to him in academic ability had been appointed on high government posts in the education department, but he never approved of accepting on educational service. His father possessed a small plot of cultivable land and was cherishing the hope that when the son would become a religious doctor after completing education, he would get a job of reasonable salary. When Maulana's contemporaries were appointed to good posts and he did not show any inclination towards service, his father felt very sorry and told, by way of a complaint, Hazrat Haji Imdad Allah: "This was my only son on whom I had pinned many hopes. If he earned something and did service, our poverty would be removed. God knows what you have done to him that he is not willing to take up a job". Haji Sahib listened and held his peace then, but later on sent him a word: "You complain of narrow circumstances. Allah Most High will give him so much even without service that he will be better off than in service, and holders of high posts will take pride in serving him".

The method of the ulema of the former times was different from the system of teaching and learning the Arabic sciences, madrasahs and cliquism that prevails and is current nowadays. Generally the ulema, sitting in their homes and mosques, used to teach purely for the sake of Allah; and for earning their livelihood they either took to

commercial dealings or used to pass life trusting in Allah. Very often it also happened that the ulema who did no business for livelihood, and engaged themselves in teaching, trusting in the Providence, were given reasonable stipends from the government of the day. The courage and perseverance and contentment of the heart with which Hazrat Nanautavi, inspite of severely unfavourable circumstances, maintained this precious practice (lit., thing, effects) of the predecessors behoved him only. Hazrat Haji Sahib used to say about him: Formerly sometimes there used to be such people; now they do not happen to be since long”.

After having completed his educational career, Hazrat Nanautavi, as a means or livelihood, adopted the job of collating and emending of books in Matba-e Ahmedi, Delhi, and this remained the means of earning till the end. Along with emendation, the practice of teaching also continued. Besides the **Sihah Sitta**, he also used to teach **Masnavi-e Maulana Rum** and other books, but the teaching work was done, instead of in a madrasah, inside the four walls of printing presses or a mosque or a house, where particular students only used to sit respectfully.

HUMILITY & INDEPENDENCE-FROM-WANT OR CONTENTMENT (ISTAGHNA)

Independence from want, humility and meekness were to such a degree in his disposition that he never used the peculiar style of dress of the ulema — the gown and the turban. He used to feel much embarrassed by veneration. He used to say: “This nominal knowledge spoilt me otherwise I would have marred my condition so much that none would have known that a man named Qasim was at all born”. He used to keep off generally from those matters in which there could be a chance of being conspicuous.¹

In 1277/1860 he went for hajj and on return from there he took up the job of collating books in Matba-e Mujtabai, Meerut, and remained attached to the same press till 1285/1868. Meanwhile, he again happened to go for hajj, and thereafter he joined Matba-e Hashimi, Meerut. During this period the occupation of teaching continued but he never liked service in any madrasah. The author of **Sawanh-e Makhtutah** has stated :-

“It is a fact known to all that the Madrasah Islami of Deoband was founded and developed by him only, and what a small government it is, this establishment; but he never took advantage of anything. In the incipience the members of the council requested him to accept

¹ **Sawanh-e Qasimi**, p. 10.

teachership in this madrasah and in return for it a meagre salary, but he did not accept and at no time, by any manner or method, tolerated to have even a grain from the madrasah, although day and night he used to be busy in the good management of the madrasah and engaged in teaching. If perchance he wrote any of his letters with the pen and ink-pot of the madrasah, he would immediately pay one anna to the treasury of the madrasah".¹

SERVICES FOR THE PRESERVATION OF ISLAM & THE STARTING OF MADRASAHs

Hazrat Nanautavi's greatest and most glorious achievement is the revivifying of an educational movement for the renaissance of religious sciences in India and the formulation of those guiding principles for the religious schools on which their survival depends. Through his attention and persuasion religious madrasahs were started at different places, like Thana Bhavan (Dist. Muzaffarnagar), Gulaothi (Dist. Buland Shahar), Kerana (Dist. Muzaffarnagar), Danpur (Dist. Buland Shahar), Meerut, Moradabad, etc. Most of them still exist, rendering educational and religious services in their vicinity, the details of which will be given in the third chapter.

Shoulder to shoulder with the English power, Christianity too had risen high in India and prodigious efforts had been made to convert the people of India, particularly the Muslims, to Christianity in every possible way. With the support and co-operation of the Company bases of Christian preaching and organisation were established throughout the length and breadth of the country, and after the revolution of 1857/1274, this system received further impetus and expansion. Padres began to impeach and impugn Islam and the Prophet of Islam (Allah's peace and blessings be on him!) in bazars, fairs and common gatherings. When Hazrat Nanautavi, during the period of his stay in Delhi witnessed this situation, he also ordered his pupils to stand like that in the bazars to give sermons and repugn and repudiate the padres. One day he himself, without introduction and giving out his name, reached a gathering and, breaking lance with Padre Tara Chand, repulsed him publicly in the bazar. Thereafter he came to be introduced with the famous polemic of Islam, Maulana Abul Mansoor Nasir al-Din Ali Dehelvi (d. 1320/1920). This event took place between Rabi' al-Awwal, 1292, and Jamadi al-Thania 1292. This was the period when Hazrat Nanautavi was staying in Munshi Mumtaz Ali's Matba-e Muhtabai, Delhi.

¹ **Sawanh-e Makhtutah**, p. 536.

FAIR FOR GOD-CONSCIOUSNESS AT SHAHJAHANPUR

A dangerous conspiracy hatched by the English government was that it set the Hindus against the Muslims. The Muslims had once had political importance and supremacy in India. The English now, under their policy, pushed up the Hindus and brought down the Muslims. When the Hindus advanced in the economic and political fields, the English prompted them towards the path of religious superiority and prepared them to break lance with the Muslims, and also provided the opportunities for this that the Hindus polemize with the Muslims openly.

Then, on May 8, 1876, a "Fair for God-Consciousness" was held at Chandapur village, near Shahjahanpur (U.P.), under the auspices of the local zamindar, Piare Lal Kabir-panthi, under the management of Padre Knowles, and with the support and permission of the collector of Shahjahanpur, Mr. Robert George. Representatives of all the three religions, Christian, Hindu and Muslim, were invited through posters to attend and prove the truthfulness of their respective religions. At the suggestion of Maulana Muhammad Munir Nanautavi and Maulavi Ilahi Bakhsh Rangin Bareillvi, Hazrat Nanautavi, accompanied by Maulana Mahmud Hasan, Maulana Raheem Allah Bijnori and Maulana Fakh al-Hasan, reached the fair. Besides Hazrat Nanautavi, Maulana Abul Mansoor Dehelvi, Mirza Mujid Jullunduri, Maulavi Ahmed Ali Dehelvi, Mir Haider Dehelvi, Maulavi Nau'man bin Luqman and Maulana Rangin Bareillvi also participated. All these ulema delivered speeches at this fair, causing the desired effect. In repudiation of the Doctrine of Trinity and Polytheism, and on affirmation of Divine Unity (Monotheism), Hazrat Nanautavi spoke so well that the audience, both those who were against and those who were for him, were convinced.

One newspaper writes :-

"In the gathering of 8th May of the current year (1876), Maulana Muhammad Qasim gave a lecture and stated the merits of Islam. The Padre Sahib explained the Trinity (or Triunity) in a strange manner, saying that in a line are found three attributes: length, breadth and depth, and thus Trinity is proven in every way. The said Maulavi Sahib confuted it promptly. Then, while the Padre Sahib and the Maulavi Sahib were debating regarding the speech, the meeting broke up, and in the vicinity and on all sides arose the outcry that the Muslim had won. Wherever a religious divine of Islam stood, thousands of men would gather around him. In the meeting of the first day the Christians did not reply to the objections raised by the

followers of Islam, while the Muslims replied the Christians word by word and won".¹

Next year this "fair" was held again in March, 1877. This time Munshi Indraman Moradabadi and Pandit Dayanand (d. 1882/1301), the founder of the Arya Samaj, also participated. Dayanandji spoke in Sanskritized Hindi. Padre Knowles had called one Padre Scot also. Hazrat Nanautavi's speeches were delivered on Theism, Monotheism, and Interpolation in Religion, and proved to be very successful.

The duties of providing board and lodging to the ulema of Islam were discharged this time by Muhammad Tahir Moti Mian.²

Hazrat Nanautavi, participating both the years in the said fair, frustrated the Christians' conspiracy. On this occasion, Prof. Muhammad Ayyub Qadiri, writing in Maulana Ahmed Hasan Nanautavi's biography, says that

"one thing specially deserves deliberation here that the fair for God-consciousness at Shahjahanpur was held consecutively for two years with announcement and publicity, throwing, in a way, a challenge to the religion of Islam and yet one does not find a clue to any interest the ulema at Bareilly and Badaun, the two districts so near, almost contiguous to Shahjahanpur, may have evinced in this fair."³

THE POLEMIC AT ROORKE

In Shawwal, 1294/1877, Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautavi, with a party of eminent ulema went for hajj and returned from there in Rabi al-Awwal, 1295/1877. On his way back, he fell ill at Jedda. After reaching his native-place, he recovered somewhat but the disease was not fully cured. The same year, in Sha'ban, A.H. 1295, he received information from Roorke that Pandit Dayanandji had reached there and was levelling objections against Islam. Maulana Nanautavi, despite his

¹ Akhbar "Khayr-khwah-e Alam", Delhi, dated 19th May, 1876, referred to in **Tarikh-e Sahafat-e Urdu**, vol. ii, pt. i, pp. 441-2. Also vide **The Arya Samaj** (English) by Dewan Chand, p. 122.

² Maulana Manazir Ahsan Gilani has written Muhammad Tahir Moti Mian to be among the progeny of Shah Madan Shahabadi (d. A.H. 1188), but this is not correct. Moti Mian was the great-grandson of Maulavi Madan (Majd al-Din) (d. A.H. 1228). Moti Mian bin Maulavi Abd Allah bin Maulavi Nizam al-Din bin Maulavi Majd al-Din alias Maulavi Madan. (Vide **Tarikh-e Shahjahanpur** by Mian Sabeeh al-Din, pp. 147-157, Pub.: Lucknow, 1932.

³ **Maulana Muhammad Ahsan**, Nanautavi, p. 221.

weakness and illness, went to Roorke and however much he wished to have a debate with Panditji in a public gathering, the latter did not agree and left Roorke. Then, at Hazrat Nanautavi's instance, Maulana Fakhr al-Hasan Gangohi and Maulana Mahmud Hasan Deobandi delivered lectures in public meetings and threw a challenge to Panditji. Hazrat Maulana Nanautavi gave replies to his objections in public meetings and, thereafter, wrote a treatise on "Istaqbal-e Qibla" (the direction of the holy Ka'ba towards which the Muslims turn their faces in prayer but do not actually worship it).¹

Thereafter Panditji reached Meerut and there too he adopted the same manner. At the request of the Muslims of Meerut, Hazrat Nanautavi went to Meerut. There also Panditji did not agree to have a debate. So, Hazrat Nanautavi gave replies to his objections in a forceful speech he delivered in a public meeting at Meerut.

REFORMATIVE MOVEMENT FOR WIDOW RE-MARRIAGE

Bringing into currency the re-marriage of widows is also a glorious social and reformative achievement of his. Till the end of the thirteenth century hijri the re-marriage of widows was considered very reproachful. People used to feel its disgracefulness but no one had the courage to put an end to it. By the laudable efforts of Sayyid Ahmed Shaheed, Maulana Muhammad Isma'il Shaheed Dehelvi, Maulana Mamluk Ali Nanautavi, Maulana Muzaffar Husain Kandhlawi, Maulana Muhammad Ahsan Nanautavi and Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautavi, the re-marriage of widows came very much into vogue. Hazrat Nanautavi, making his widowed sister, who was much older than himself and had become quite old, prepared for re-marriage, broke up this disgraceful custom in such a way that now no one knows that such a custom once prevailed here.

PARTICIPATION IN THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

Taking manly part in the battle for independence in 1857, he captured the tehsil of Shamli in Muzaffarnagar district but the corrupted political atmosphere prevailing then did not let him advance further from Shamli. This incident of recounter at Shamli is so well-known that it need not be repeated here.

Hazrat Nanautavi has left behind more than two dozen books to perpetuate his memory. In his time he set his pen to paper on those

¹ Vide **Intesar al-Islam** by Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautavi, pp. 2-7, Pub. : Deoband, 1952.

questions which were mostly on the tapis then. All his books have been written in response to one query or the other. Munshi Mumtaz Ali,¹ proprietor of Matba-e Mujtabai, Delhi, in 1292/1875, had chalked out a programme to publish all of Hazrat Nanautavi's works. In the advertisement of this programme printed by him, he had stated :-

"Many gentlemen must be knowing Maulavi Muhammad Qasim Sahib. He avoids contention and disputation and passes an independent life in a condition of detachment. If some one sent him a query regarding some difficult proposition from distant land, he would write its answer, otherwise he hasn't anything to do with anyone. And why should he have, for he has no trace of carnality in him? This slave is enamoured of his independent way of life and fond of his disquisitional writings. For a long time I was contemplating to secure his writings somehow and, having printed them, show the tamasha of divine omnipotence to the high-minded people of the time. He had a prodigious talent in proving the religio-legal propositions with rational arguments and in refuting the philosophers' propositions also with the same rational arguments".²

DEATH

Hazrat Nanautavi passed away on Thursday, 4th Jamadi al-Ula, 1297/1880, at the age of 49 years. His sacred grave is to the north of the Dar al-Ulum, clay-built according to the sunnah practice. This place is known as Qabrastan-e Qasimi, where countless ulema, students, pious men and other people are lying buried.

¹ Munshi Mumtaz Ali ibn Shaikh Amjad Ali Meeruthi was a celebrated calligraphist of his time. Nuzhat-Raqam was his title and in calligraphy he was a disciple of Bahadur Shah Zafar, the last Mughal emperor. Copies of the holy Quran written by him have had great importance as regards accuracy and orthography. The circle of Munshi Sahib's disciples was very vast. Formerly he used to work as a copyist in Delhi at Maulana Ahmed Ali Muhaddith Saharanpuri's Matba-e Ahmedi. After the revolution of 1857 he set up his own press in Meerut under the name of Matba-e Mujtabai. Hazrat Nanautavi used to work in the same press. In 1258/1868, when Munshi Sahib went for hajj, Maulavi Abd al-Hadi acquired the rights of running the Matba-e Mujtabai. Next year, after returning from hajj, he established, in 1286/1869, his Matba-e Mujtabai in Delhi instead of Meerut. In 1304/1886, when Munshi Sahib determined to emigrate to Mecca, he sold the press to Maulavi Abd al-Ahad for Rs. 500/-. There is mention of Munshi Mumtaz Ali in Mirza Ghalib's letters. It was he who had published first Ghalib's **Ood-e Hindi** in his Matba-e Mujtabai at Meerut.

S. Mahboob Rizvi.

² **Maulana Muhammad Ahsan Nanautavi**, P. 225.

Many people wrote chronogrammatic quatrains on Hazrat Nanautavi's death. The one composed in Urdu by Maulana Fazl al-Rahman Usmani is still hanging in the Vice-chancellor's office. Just to give an idea at the thoughts expressed in it, the English translation of the verses is given below :-

"Such is the sorrow caused by the passing away of the Qasim of the assembly of guidance that every heart (lit., interior) is sipping the draught of grief. Such is sorrow that thereby the cup of the assembly of spiritual knowledge is inverted like the cask at the sky. Not only is the earth pallid due to this sorrow; the attire of the sky too is bluish in this mourning. Though the supporters of the Shari'ah have had boundless sorrow, the wayfarers of the Path are suffering it doubly. Where's the true supporter of the madrasah of religion that without him the realm of knowledge and action is desolate? Don't ask about the condition of the sad hearts at the thirsty seekers of knowledge, as to how their life is in your separation. If the flame of separation has grilled the liver, the fire of the grief of separation has roasted the heart. However, from your sacred grave, O good-natured one, your devotees do have a patience of sorts. Out of anguish wrote Fazl this year of death: '**Wafat-e Sarwar-e Alam ka yeh namoona hai**' (i.e., this is a specimen of the death at the Chief of the World). (The numerical value of the Urdu letters at the last half-verse totals up to A.H. 1297).

THE SIX GREAT ONES

The names of those gentlemen who participated from the very inception in establishing the Dar al-Ulum and in running its administration are as follows :-

Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautavi, Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Yaqub Nanautavi, Hazrat Haji Sayyid Muhammad Abid Deobandi, Hazrat Maulana Rafi' al-Din Deobandi, Hazrat Maulana Zulfiqar Ali Deobandi and Hazrat Maulana Fazl al-Rahman Usmani Deobandi. Particulars about Hazrat Nanautavi have already been given above; of the remaining first, three will be presented in the following chapters, and of the latter, two are given below :-

MAULANA ZULFIQAR ALI

Maulana Zulfiqar Ali was Maulana Mahmud Hasan's father. He had studied in Delhi College under Maulana Mamluk Ali Nanautavi (d. 1267/1851). After graduation, he was appointed as a professor in

Bareilly College and a few years later he was appointed as Deputy Inspector in the Education Department. He had had great mastery over the Arabic language and literature. He wrote **Tashil al-Darasa** as commentary of **Divan-e Himasa**, **Tashil al-Bayan** as the commentary of **Divan-e Mutanabbi**, **Al-Ta'liqat 'ala al-Sab'a at-Mu'allaqat** as the commentary of the **Sab'a Mu'allaqa**, **Irshad** as the commentary of **Qasida Bant Su'ad**, and **'Itr al-Wardah** as the commentary of the **Qasida-e Burda**, in Urdu. He has translated the unfamiliar and difficult words and idioms of Arabic in such lucid and idiomatic language and the explanation is so agreeable that these tough books of Arabic literature have become very easy and intelligible for the Indian students. In rhetorics he left behind **Tazkirat al-Balaghat**, and in mathematics, **Tashil al-Hisab**.

In A. H. 1307 he wrote a brief treatise in Arabic, entitled **Al-Hadya al-Sinya fi Zikr al-Madrasat al-Islamiya al-Deobandiya**, in which he has reviewed in a very subtle and literary style the attributes and accomplishments of the elders of the Dar al-Ulum and the peculiarities of Deoband.

Regarding Maulana Zulfiqar Ali, the famous author of France, Garcin de Tassy writes :-

“He was an alumnus of Delhi College. After some years he became a professor in Bareilly College. In 1857 he was a deputy inspector at schools in Meerut. Mr. Taylor who was acquainted with him says about him that Zulfiqar Ali, besides being intelligent and quick-witted, was conversant with Persian and western sciences also. He has written a book, **Tashil al-Hisab** (“Arithmetic Made Easy”) in Urdu which has been published in Bareilly in 1852”.¹

After receiving pension (on retirement) he served as an Honorary Magistrate in Deoband. He was amongst the earliest founders of the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband. He died at the age of 85 years, in 1322/1904. His grave is situated to the east, near Hazrat Nanautavi's. On his left lies buried Maulana Muhammad Ahsan Nanautavi, of which an interesting indication is given by the following Urdu verse composed by Maulana Fazl al-Rahman Usmani :-

“Yes, sleep more comfortably between your own two friends: Qasim of the banquet of affection and the suave Ahsan”.

¹ Garcin de Tassy referred to in Maulana **Muhammad Ahsan Nanautavi**, p. 27.

MAULANA FAZL AL-RAHMAN USMANI

Maulana Fazl al-Rahman Usmani had also studied under Maulana Mamluk Ali in the Delhi College. He was one of the founders of the Dar al-Ulum and remained a member of the Majlis-e Shura till the end. He was a high-ranking poet of Persian and Urdu; many poems, panegyrics, elegies etc. reflect his high poetical taste. In 1301/1883, a terrific plague had burst out in Deoband. He has versified the devastations of this plague in Persian language. The chronogrammatic name of this descriptive poem is "Qissa-e Gham-e Diban" (A.H. 1301), which is a historical document on the conditions of Deoband. Maulana Fazl al-Rahman had had great expertise in composing chronograms also. Many of his poems and chronogrammatic fragments have been quoted in the reports of the Dar al-Ulum. He held the post of Deputy Inspector of Schools in the Education Department. He was posted as such at Bareilly, Bijnore, Saharanpur and other districts. In 1857 he was deputy inspector of schools at Bareilly. During this tumultuous event when Maulana Muhammad Ahsan Nanautavi was constrained to leave Bareilly, he had entrusted some of his matters to him only.¹

Maulana Fazl al-Rahman passed away in 1325/1907. He left behind amongst his sons such reputed and matchless ulema like Hazrat Maulana Mufti Aziz al-Rahman Usmani, Mufti-e Azam, Dar al-Ulum, Deoband; Hazrat Maulana Habib al-Rahman Usmani, Vice-Chancellor, Dar al-Ulum, Deoband; and Maulana Shabbir Ahmed Usmani, Chancellor, Dar al-Ulum, Deoband. The chief administrator of Nadvat al-Musannafin, Delhi, Hazrat Maulana Mufti Atiq al-Rahman Usmani, is his grandson. Hazrat Maulana Fazl al-Rahman's sons and successors have rendered great academic and religious services, which, thank Allah, still continue.

HAZRAT MAULANA RASHEED AHMED GANGOHI

Although no clue of Hazrat Gangohi's formal relation with the Dar al-Ulum is found² before A.H. 1285, in the light of the deep relations

¹ **Maulana Muhammad Ahsan Nanautavi**, p. 52.

² Hazrat Gangohi's following inspection is mentioned in the report for A.H. 1285:- Today, on 3rd Rajab, A.H. 1285, this humble being visited the Madrasah of Deoband and happened to inspect the condition of the madrasah, teachers and the taught. From the chart was known the presence of 85 Arabic-learning students besides those who learn Persian and the Quran. From what little was heard in different classes (from the students), the managers' management, the teachers' sincere effort and the students' endeavour and labour were found to be worthy of applause. If they continue to try like this, the probability is that, completing the acquirement of Arabic within a short time they will be able to give the benefit of their knowledge of religious sciences. Finis. The slave hoping for Allah's mercy.

Rasheed Ahmed Gangohi.

he has had ab initio with the elders of the Dar al-Ulum, it seems impossible that he might have remained unconcerned with the movement of the Dar al-Ulum. After their stay in the Dar al-Ulum and completing their education there, some students used to go to Gangoh and used to benefit by attending Hazrat Gangohi's lecture on Hadith. Hence it becomes necessary and inevitable to mention Hazrat Gangohi along with the elders of the Dar al-Ulum.

Hazrat Gangohi was born on Monday, 6th Ziq'a'da, A.H. 1242, at Gangoh¹. His august father, Maulana Hidayat Ahmed, was an excellent religious divine of his time and a majaz (a disciple authorized by the murshid to receive ba'iah - spiritual allegiance - and give spiritual guidance), of Hazrat Shah Ghulam Ali Mujaddidi of Delhi.

Hazrat Gangohi, having read the holy Quran at his native-place, went to Kernal to live with his maternal uncle and under him he studied books of Persian. Then he studied grammar and syntax under Maulavi Muhammad Baksh Rampuri. In A.H. 1261 he went to Delhi and became a pupil of Maulana Mamluk Ali Nanautavi. It was here that he cultivated attachment with Hazrat Nanautavi which was maintained till the end. In Delhi he read some books of the rational sciences under the instruction of Mufti Sadr al-Din Azurda² also. At the end he lived in the company of Hazrat Shah Abd al-Ghani Mujaddidi and acquired the science of Hadith from him.

After having completed his education, he waited upon Shaikh al-Masha'ikh Hazrat Haji Imdad Allah and attained the honour of bai'ah. Maulana Muhammad Yaqub Nanautavi has stated in **Sawanh-e Qasimi**:

¹ Gangoh is an ancient village of Saharanpur (district) ascribed to Raja Gang of the ancient India. It is nearly 33 miles south of Saharanpur. This village has acquired historical fame due to its relation with one of the celebrated Chishtiyya Shaikhs, viz., Hazrat Shaikh Abd al-Quddus (d. 945/1538).

² Mufti Sadr al-Din Azurda was born in Delhi in 1204/1789. He completed his education under the instruction of Shah Abd al-Aziz, Shah Abd al-Qadir and Shah Muhammad Ishaq. The East India Company had appointed him to the post of Chief Judge (Sadr al-sudur) and mufti at Delhi. He used to teach students at his residence. In 1857, under the inculcation of having set his signature on the fatwa for jihad (against the English), his library worth three lakhs of rupees and his estate were confiscated. He was released from internment after several months and some of his estate too was restored to him.

He used to write poetry in all the three languages: Arabic, Persian and Urdu; Azurda was his nom de plume. He re-started the old madrasah, Dar al-Baqa, of Delhi. He used to bear all the expenses of the students himself. He died on Thursday, 24th Rabi al-Awwal, A.H. 1285/1868.

There has been class-fellowship and friendship between Maulavi Rasheed Ahmed Gangohi and Maulavi Muhammad Qasim from this time onwards. In the end he read Hadith under Shah Abd al-Ghani and during the same period both of them vowed allegiance to Hazrat Haji Imdad Allah (may his shadow last long!) and started the suluk (traversing of the Sufi way)". Maulana Rasheed Ahmed traversed the path very quickly; accordingly, within the short span of 40 days he was awarded khilafat and, returning to Gangoh, he made his abode in Hazrat Shaikh Abd al-Quddus Gangohi's cloister.¹ During this period the means of livelihood was medical practice.

Intrepidly he stirred out from the Quddusian hospice in 1857 to stand up in battle array against the English and, participating in the jihad at Shamli in the company of his murshid, Haji Sahib, and other companions, fought valiantly. When Hafiz Zamin Shaheed fell on the battle-ground, he picked up his corpse, took it to a mosque nearby, and sitting near it, started reading the Quran.

After the recounter of Shamli a warrant of arrest was issued against him. He was arrested and sent to Saharanpur jail from where he was shifted to Muzaffarnagar. Six months were passed in jail. There many prisoners became his adherents with the result that they all began to say prayers congregationally in the prison.

After his release from jail, he started teaching. In A.H. 1299, after his third hajj he made it an obligation for himself that he would complete the entire **Sihah Sitta** within one year. The regular practice was that he used to teach the students from morning till 12-00 noon. Hearing about the fame of his teaching, students of Hadith used to come to him from distant places, their number sometimes reaching to seventy and eighty and included students from outside India as well. His behaviour with the students used to be very kind and affectionate. The lecture used to be so lucid that even an average man could understand it, and a special quality of his teaching of Hadith was that after listening to the content of a hadith one used to be infused with the eagerness to act upon it. His lecture on **Jam'e Tirmizi** has been published under the title **Al-**

¹ This cloister in the hospice of Hazrat Qutub al-Alam Gangohi was lying uninhabited and desolate for centuries and had become, by vicissitudes of time, the stable and retreat of washermen's ponies and donkeys. Hazrat Gangohi cleansed the cloister of all dirt and rubbish, dug up the dirty and unclean earth, poured clean earth there and plastered and whitewashed the walls. Thus, after nearly three hundred and fifty years, this cloister which was the abode of a great spiritual guide of the tenth century hijri became habitable again.

Kaukab al-Durri, which, despite its brevity, is a very comprehensive commentary on the **Tirmizi**. His teaching-work continued till A.H. 1314. More than three hundred gentlemen completed the course of Hadith, the last pupil amongst them being Hazrat Shaikh al-Hadith Maulana Muhammad Zakariya's august father, Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Yahaya Kandhlavi. In the end the lectures stopped due to the ailment of cataract in the eyes but the practice of spiritual instruction and inculcation and fatwa-issuing continued regularly. Great attention was paid to inducing and persuading the audience and visitors for zikr (remembrance of Allah). Those who came to wait upon him necessarily used to take along with them at least some inclination for the things of the Hereafter. He used to be very anxious about conforming to the sunnah in every matter.

In A.H. 1297, after Hazrat Nanautavi's death, he was made patron of the Dar al-Ulum. The unravelling of knotty problems of the Dar al-Ulum in times of difficulty was one of his great peculiarities. From A.H. 1314 he agreed to be the patron of Madrasah Mazahir-e Ulum, Saharanpur, also.

On Fiqh and Tasawwuf he wrote nearly 14 books.

With some variance in report, he died at the age of 78 years on Friday, 8th or 9th Jamadi al-Sani, 1323/1905, after the prayer-call for the Friday prayer. Of his pupils there is a vast circle, which includes great and illustrious ulema. Similarly, the list of his khalifas (spiritual successors) too is quite long. The details of his life are available in **Tazkirat al-Rasheed**, a book compiled in two volumes by Maulana Ashiq Ilahi Meeruthi.

DEOBAND

THE LAND OF THE DAR AL-ULUM

Deoband and the Dar al-Ulum are concomitant, as close as brassiere is to the body; the Dar al-Ulum is very deeply connected with Deoband. The history of Deoband is a part of the greatness and honour of the Dar al-Ulum. Deoband is a very old habitation. This name is a compound of "Devi" and "Ban", and so the habitation was formerly known as Deviban, which, due to excessive use, later on became Diban and then, in common parlance, it changed to Deoband.

Deoband is situated in north India on 29°58' latitude and 77°35' altitude. The Northern Railway passes through the south-west of Deoband.

The Deoband railway station is 144 kilometres north of Delhi. In the Uttar Pradesh state of India, Deoband is a tehsil in the Saharanpur district. Its position was the same during the Mughal regime also. Remains of an ancient fort are also found here. A fort made of baked bricks during Emperor Akbar's period (963/1555 - 1014/1605) was also existing here. About this fort Abul Fazl has stated in the **Aa'in-e Akbari**¹ as under :-

“Deoband has had a fort of baked bricks”.

It says in the **Imperial Gazetteer of India**² as follows :-

“The Pandavas had passed the initial period of their exile at this very place. The fort here was among the earliest forts captured by Salar Mas'ud Ghazi”.

Traces of Muslim population in Deoband are found since the seventh century hijri (thirteenth century A.D.). Qazi Danyal Qatri, a disciple of Khwaja Usman Haruni (d. 607/1210), lived here long during Qutub al-Din Aibak's (602/1206 - 606/1210) regime. The tomb of Shah Ala al-Din Junglebash (d. 742/1341), a pupil of a pupil of the great traditionist, Ibn Jauzi, to the south east of Deoband is a shrine visited by the high and the low. The population of Deoband is nearly forty thousand out of which a little more than half are Muslims.

Some mosques built during the Islamic rule are still extant in Deoband, particularly Masjid-e Qil'ah of Sultan Sikander Lodi's time (894/1488 - 923/1517); Masjid-e Khanqah of Emperor Akbar's regime (963/1555 - 1014/1605); and Masjid-e Abul Ma'ali of Awrangzeb's period (1068/1657 - 1118/1706). The above-mentioned mosques are those which have had inscriptions in them; some others are reported to be still older than them but a historical proof of their antiquity is not found.³

It is a remarkable peculiarity of this land - the north-western districts of Uttar Pradesh - that it has always been a repository of religious traditions. This green and fertile part of the country irrigated by the Ganges and the Jamuna has been considered holy from times immemorial. The establishment of the Dar al-Ulum in the last phase of the thirteenth century hijri added more grace to its glory wherefore its fame spread throughout the world and students from the continents of

¹ vol. ii, p. 143.

² vol. xi, 242: A.D. 1008.

³ For details regarding Deoband, vide this writer's **Tarikh-e Deoband**.

Asia and Africa began to be drawn to it. For more than a hundred years Deoband has been the centre of religious sciences and Islamic culture. In short, this fame has played a great part in the service of religion and the advancement of knowledge. The unparalleled educational, academic and ideal role that the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, in its capacity of a great and glorious, teaching institutions has played in the history of the Indian Muslims is sui generis. Indeed it is difficult to find an example of such great service even in other Islamic countries as its inspired sons are rendering fervently, for more or less one hundred years, to Islam and the religious sciences. The ulema nurtured here have been irrigating, besides the sub-continent, the Islamic countries of Asia also from the limpid stream of their knowledge and action.

The Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, is not only a centre of religious education of the Indian Muslims; it has rather had the honour of being the head-spring of many religious movements. A contributor says in the **Mujalla-e Ulum al-Din**, Aligarh, as under:-

"Its graduates have made great achievements in the academic field which include, besides the writing and compilation of useful books, discovery of old academic treasures, useful and significant commentaries, scholia and translations of countless books.

"Besides this the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband, has also been a centre of political guidance for the Indian Muslims. Its graduates have not only associated with and worked for different movements but have also been themselves instrumental in the creation of several movements. Thus they had always been guiding the Muslims correctly till they achieved the country's independence".¹

Having taken innumerable students of religion into its laps, the Dar al-Ulum has enabled them academically to discharge the obligation of preaching Islam admirably in the sub-continent: India, Pakistan and Bangla Desh. Accordingly, a distinct contributing factor in whatever religious awakening is found today in India, Pakistan, etc., consists in the consistent efforts of the ulema of Deoband.

The large-heartedness, liberality and love of knowledge which the inhabitants of Deoband have displayed in the establishment, maintenance and progress of the Dar al-Ulum are surely scarce, if not unexampled. It is indeed a very great exploit of the people of Deoband - the way the charitable among them vied with one another in providing

¹ **Mujalla-e Ulum al-Din**, 1971-72, p. 186.

